

Hafa Adai!

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CNMI in state of emergency

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

The CNMI is now under a state of significant emergency, with a ban in place against the entry of travelers from mainland China, chiefly to prevent the entry of the novel coronavirus, 2019-nCoV, which first arose in Wuhan, China.

In an executive order yesterday, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres declared a state of significant emergency in the Commonwealth and ordered the creation of response, quarantine, and preventive containment measures in the CNMI.

He was quick to assure, though, that the decision to issue the executive order is just a precautionary measure. "I am issuing the emergency

RELATED NEWS

Deaths rise to 132 in China outbreak as foreigners leave.

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Jet evacuates Americans from China outbreak zone.

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Tourists in face masks line up at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport as a preventative measure against the novel coronavirus, 2019-nCoV.

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

declaration out of an abundance of caution to ensure that the CNMI stays safe and that we minimize the potential exposure of our people to this highly communicable virus," Torres said in a press state-

ment last night.

The state of significant emergency takes effect immediately, and shall remain in effect for 30 days, unless terminated by the governor.

See CNMI on Page 4

'CPA will suffer \$2.2M revenue loss'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority tentatively expects to lose an estimated \$2.2 million due to the suspension of flights from China as a result of the coronavirus outbreak that started in Wuhan.

In response to *Saipan Tribune's*



King-Hinds

request for comments about the virus outbreak's impact on CPA's revenue, CPA board chair Kimberly King-Hinds disclosed that their comptroller's preliminary review of the impacts peg an annual loss of \$2.2 million should the suspension of flights continue toward end of fiscal year.

See CPA on Page 4

Bad timing: New virus poses a threat to fragile world economy

By PAUL WISEMAN, JOE McDONALD and YURI KAGEYAMA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

This should be peak season for a 12-room hotel near the train station in the Chinese industrial hub of Wuhan. The Chinese New Year usually brings in plenty of travelers

and delivers profits of around \$3,000 a month.

But the place is empty. Wuhan, the center of a deadly viral outbreak, is on lockdown. "There is not a single customer," said the hotel's owner, who gave only his surname, Cui. He still has to pay rent and his utility bills.

Instead of counting his earnings, he's expecting to lose \$1,500 a month.

The outbreak arrives at a bad time for Wuhan, China and the world economy.

China, with the world's No. 2 economy, was decelerating even before the corona-

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NATION

President Trump unveils his Mideast peace plan alongside Benjamin Netanyahu.

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WORLD

A magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck in the Caribbean Sea between Jamaica and eastern Cuba.

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ENVIRONMENT

An amorous giant tortoise is being credited with saving his species from extinction.

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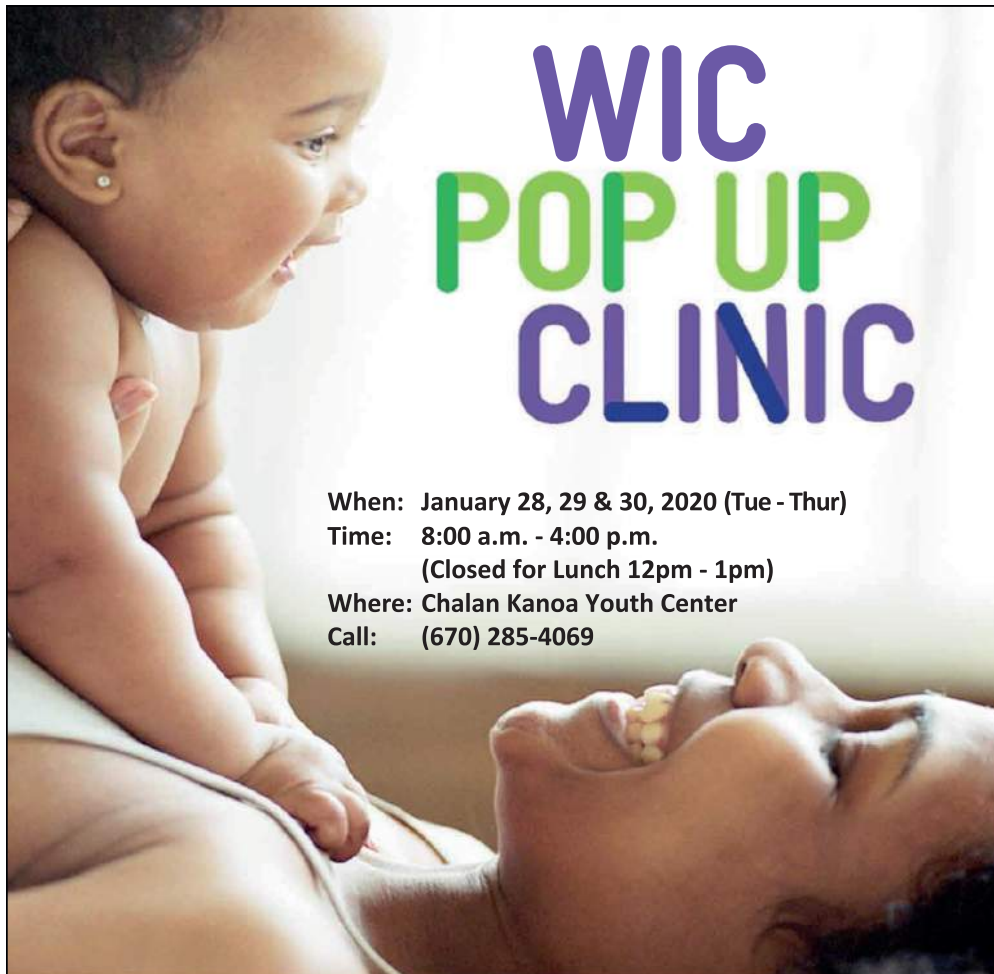
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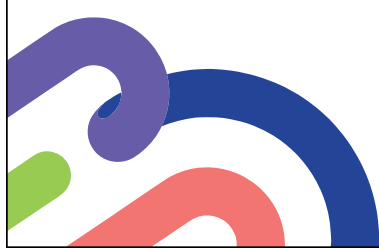
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WIC provides healthy food, nutrition education, and breastfeeding guidance to more than 3,000 moms and children in the CNMI. If you are pregnant, a caregiver, a caregiver, or a mom with children under 5, you can get the right personalized support for you and your family.



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JUDICIAL INSPECTION

U. S. District Court for the NMI designated Judge David O. Carter climbs to the top of one of two new fuel tanks installed at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s Power Plant 4 in Puerto Rico, Saipan, during his inspection Tuesday. Carter also inspected the four new units of oil/water separators at the same power plant, as well as other projects at Power Plants 1 and 2 in Lower Base.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Legal fight over use of logo in settlement talks

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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 REPORTER

The parties in a lawsuit over the alleged use of a company logo without permission by two other companies are looking at a potential settlement of the case.

The parties, through their counsels, informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI yesterday about their ongoing talks for a possible settlement.

Cong Nie is counsel for plaintiff Yoshitsu Co. Ltd. (YCT). Robert T. Torres is counsel for defendants American Create Beauty Corp., American American Dong Sheng Corp., and Weidong Guo.

Guo is the president and owner of both American Create and American Dong Sheng.

Nie and Torres asked the court yesterday to give the defendant more time to respond

to YCT's lawsuit because of their discussions for a possible settlement.

YCT is suing the defendants for trademark counterfeiting, trademark infringement, false designation of origin and fake descriptions and representations, unfair or deceptive trade act or practice, and trademark infringement.

YCT asked the court to hold American Create, American Dong Sheng, and Guo liable to pay up to \$2 million for each trademark that they have counterfeited and/or infringed.

YCT asked the court to issue an injunction preventing American Create Beauty Corp., American Dong Sheng Corp., Guo, and co-defendants, and their agents from using the trademark in connection with any goods or services.

YCT has asked the court to stop the defendants from engaging in any course of conduct likely to cause confusion, deception, or mistake, or to injure YST's business reputation.

The plaintiff has also asked the court to rule that the defendants have violated the Lanham Act and have engaged in unfair or deceptive acts or practices under the CNMI Consumer Protection Act, and have engaged in trademark infringement under the common law of the CNMI.

According to Nie in the complaint, YCT is the sole owner of a design trademark that read "Tokyo Seikatsukan" in Japanese and translates to "Tokyo Lifestyle Store" in English.



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'Increase in Japanese tourists could cover loss of China market'

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Marianas Visitors Authority is hoping that more Japanese tourists arriving for the rest of the fiscal year would be enough to take up the slack in the China market.

In a PowerPoint presentation he did at the Coronavirus Mitigation Conference at Saipan World Resort last Tuesday, Marianas Visitors Authority marketing manager Thomas Kim said the MVA is hoping that the losses the CNMI expects to see from the China market will be offset by an increase in the arrival of Japanese tourists.

Kim said that MVA is looking at a projected 48,000 tourist arrivals from Japan this fiscal year.

"[We're expecting] an increase in Japanese tourists. Japan is looking to go to an estimate of 48,000 visitors for fiscal year 2020," he said.

The increase in tourist numbers, Kim said, is attributed to Skymark Airline's daily direct flights from Japan to the CNMI.

That does not mean that everything is going to be hunky-dory for the CNMI's tourism industry. Kim said that MVA expects to lose over 47,000 Chinese tourists for the rest of the fiscal year. MVA projects zero arrivals from China



KIMBERLY BAUTISTA
The panelists of the coronavirus mitigation conference last Tuesday at the Saipan World Resort Taga Hall.

for the remainder of the fiscal year.

"Taking into consideration that the Korea market and Japan market are doing fairly well with visitor arrivals, that would definitely help cover for the numbers that we are expecting to lose from the China market. I can't say that we're OK, considering that China is our second largest market, but we are trying our best to get those numbers covered from other markets," he said.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, MVA projects zero Chinese tourist arrivals starting February until the end of the fiscal year, which means a loss of about 47,467 Chinese tourists.

The follows the issuance of a notice from Chinese authori-

ties—effective immediately—instructing Chinese airlines to ban outbound travel from China. The notice is being looked as a means to contain the virus, called 2019-nCoV,

within China, where the virus is believed to have originated from.

"The Chinese authorities have sent out a notice to Chinese [airlines] encouraging

them to ban outbound travels from China. The notice was sent out on Jan. 26 from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China," said Kim.

Manglona bats for travel restrictions

By **IVA MAURIN**
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REPORTER

With increasing concerns about the novel coronavirus entering and spreading in the CNMI, Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) asked Gov. Ralph DLG Torres yesterday that a temporary travel restriction to and from China be put in place.

"I am respectfully requesting that we have travel restrictions in place to temporarily halt travel to and from China for a few weeks or until such time that this virus is studied and under control," the senator stated.

Manglona sent Torres his letter just before Torres issued his executive order yesterday

that declared a state of emergency for the CNMI and barred the entry of travelers from China to the CNMI.

In his letter to Torres, Manglona said he is particularly expressed concerned about reports that carriers may show no symptoms for up to two weeks, and that the person, within that incubation period, is contagious and may spread the virus.

"Unlike the SARS outbreak in 2002-2003, which infected people showed symptoms of runny nose, fever, and cough, it is difficult to detect infected individuals with this new strain of coronavirus as they



Manglona

may not show symptoms immediately," he said.

Manglona further said that, unlike in 2002 to 2003, during the SARS outbreak, the CNMI has become easily accessible for tourists from China, and that he is

concerned of the potential threat and harm people on the islands will suffer in the event the virus reaches the islands.

"Due to the uncertainty about the virus, its fast-spreading nature, the lack of a vaccine, and the growing evidence that asymptomatic people may carry the virus, it is absolutely imperative that we protect our people from a possible out-

break in our islands.

"It is essential that we closely work with the Centers of Disease Control to ensure that our Commonwealth is included in their recently reported plan to boost staff at 20 U.S. airports that have quarantine facilities. We should have the same capability as these 20 mainland airports to screen all passengers traveling from China," the senator added.

CDC is still studying the virus, and recently increased its travel warning to Level 3 alert, recommending people to avoid all nonessential travel to China. The United States has expanded its screenings for coronavirus at airports and borders as the death toll in China reaches 132, with the number of confirmed cases ballooning to almost 6,000.

BOE promises no further salary cuts

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Board of Education assures all teachers that, with the Supreme Court ruling on its side on the issue of general revenues, they promise no further cuts to their salary and no payless payday.

BOE chair Janice Tenorio assured all Public School System teachers that they should not worry about additional cuts to their salaries and reverting back to the 2017 compensation plan.

"We will never cut the teachers again. We've cut the teachers before, already, I mean this past austerity, but it will not [happen again]. There will be no additional cuts to the teachers or the schools," she said.

Last Tuesday, BOE members met with a little over 20 PSS teachers to discuss their thoughts and concerns regarding the Supreme Court's ruling on the 25 percent share of PSS on the general fund revenue.

One of the concerns was whether the BOE and PSS were going to fight for the money that the government owes PSS pursuant to the Supreme Court's ruling.

Tenorio said that everyone

has the right to voice their opinion on whether to fight for the money the government owes PSS, or to ask for what's needed and to move forward.

However, Tenorio said she wants to remind teachers that the economy is still recovering from Super Typhoon Yutu and, with the threat of the novel coronavirus to the tourism industry, getting back to where the government use to be might take longer.

"I'm just saying that when the money is not there, we just need to compromise. Why fight and then everything just shuts down," she said.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Marylou Ada, former BOE chairwoman and current board member, said they are working on requesting the 25% that PSS is owed, starting off with a \$3 million monthly allotment to reopen schools and to get back on track.

Ada elaborated that the monthly allotment of \$3 million would go to gas for student transportation, personnel salary, classroom repairs, and other operational costs. This would also allow PSS to retract the 50% salary cut that was implemented back in July 2019.

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Value-added producer grants available for farmers

HILO, Hawaii—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development is now accepting applications for the Value-Added Producer Grant program. Nationally, there is approximately \$37 million available.

The VAPG program helps agricultural producers enter value-added

activities related to the processing and marketing of new products. The goal of this program is the generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities, and increase producer income.

The program requires a 50% match and offers up to \$75,000 for planning grants and up to \$250,000

for working capital grants. Examples of planning activities include conducting feasibility studies and developing business plans for processing and marketing the proposed value-added product. Examples of working capital expenses are processing costs, marketing and advertising expenses, and some inven-

tory and salary expenses.

Complete program details including application toolkits, forms, and relevant links are available online at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/value-added-producer-grants>.

Paper application must be received by March 10, 2020, and

electronic application must be submitted via grants.gov by March 5, 2020.

For more information on the VAPG program, contact Business Programs specialist Anthony Barcinas at (671) 300-8567 or email him at anthony.barcinas@usda.gov. (PR)

BAD

From Page 1

virus hit.

And the world economy is coping with an unexpectedly sharp slowdown in No. 7 India, which prompted the International Monetary Fund last week to downgrade its outlook for global growth this year.

The coronavirus is drawing comparisons to the SARS outbreak, which paralyzed the economies of China and Hong Kong for weeks in 2003. But what happens in China carries a lot more weight these days: In 2003, China accounted for 4% of global output. Now its share is 16%, according to the World Bank.

"A growth slowdown in China could have sizable ripple effects across Asia and the rest of the world, given the size of China's economy and its role as the key driver of global growth in recent years," said Eswar Prasad, a Cornell University economist and former head of the International Monetary Fund's China division.

No one knows exactly how the outbreak will play out or what its

economic impact will be.

Authorities are still trying to better understand the new virus. It is from the coronavirus family, which also can cause the common cold as well as more serious illnesses such as SARS.

So far, China has confirmed more than 4,500 coronavirus cases and more than 100 deaths.

The Chinese government has locked down Wuhan and 16 other cities in Hubei province, isolating more than 50 million people. The United States and other countries prepared Tuesday to airlift their citizens out of Wuhan. The outbreak has brought every day business to a standstill and closed down such popular tourist attractions as Beijing's former imperial palace, Shanghai Disneyland, Hong Kong Disneyland and the city's Ocean Park.

The significant decline in travel has already caused United Airlines to suspend some flights to Beijing, Hong Kong and Shanghai, the airline said in a statement.

"It's still too soon to measure what the impact is going to be from an economic perspective," said Jim Baird, chief investment officer at Plante Moran Financial Advisors.

The SARS experience offers some reason for economic optimism. That outbreak, centered in southern China, initially clobbered the Chinese economy. In the April-June quarter of 2003, China's economic growth dropped to an annual rate of 9.1% from 11.1% the previous quarter, noted economists Tommy Wu and Priyanka Kishore of Oxford Economics. But as the health crisis subsided, growth picked back up, recovering to a 10% annual rate in the second half of the year.

"From what we know, it's likely to be similar this time," said Andy Rothman, investment strategist at Matthews Asia. "People shouldn't get panicked that growth is going to slow sharply" over a sustained period.

Still, the Chinese economy isn't the dynamo it was in the early and mid-2000s when growth routinely hit double digits.

The IMF expects China's growth to drop from 6.1% in 2019, already the slowest since 1990, to 6% this year and 5.8% next. The slowdown reflects China's difficult transition from fast but unsustainable growth built around often-wasteful invest-

ments to steadier but less striking growth built on consumer spending by the country's growing middle class.

The Chinese economy has also been buffeted by a trade war with the United States. The two countries signed a truce earlier this month that was expected to provide some economic relief. Then the viral outbreak hit.

As part of the so-called Phase 1 deal, China agreed to increase purchases of U.S. products by \$200 billion over this year and next. That goal sounded ambitious even before the viral outbreak isolated tens of millions of Chinese consumers and delivered a wallop to consumer and business confidence.

Rothman suspects the United States might give the Chinese a little leeway. "Both governments really want the deal to work," he said. "If it is clear that (Chinese purchases) are off to a slow start not because the Chinese government is not trying its best but because of the virus, the Trump administration is likely to be sympathetic."

There has been no immediate impact on China's vast manufacturing

industries because factories already were closed for the Lunar New Year holiday and weren't due to reopen until this week or later.

"I think the first quarter looks like it will take quite a significant hit," said Rajiv Biswas, chief Asia economist for IHS Markit. "This still is escalating, so it's hard to talk about when this will be contained."

Further delays in restarting production could send shock waves through Asian suppliers of components and exporters of iron ore, copper and other commodities as far away as Australia, Brazil and Africa.

Foreign suppliers usually see a surge in Chinese orders as factories restock after shutting down for 10 days or more during the holiday.

"The loss of economic output could be quite substantial, and that has consequences for the Asian manufacturing supply chain, because orders won't come in the way people expect," Biswas said.

The impact in other developing Asian countries might reduce their 2020 economic growth by 1.5 to 2 percentage points, according to a forecast by Edward Glossop of Capital Economics.



People wear masks at a shopping district in Seoul, South Korea, Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020.

CPA

From Page 1

"That's just CPA," she pointed out.

She said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres is working with the Marianas Visitors Authority, Department of Finance, and the Office of the Management and Budget to get the necessary data to determine the overall impact on the CNMI.

King-Hinds believes that the financial impact will be substantial and that Torres thinks as much by including in his executive order yesterday language that mandates an impact report.

"With that being said, the health and wellbeing of our community is priceless and the governor made the right call," said King-Hinds, referring to Torres' declaration of a state of significant emergency yesterday.

Travelers from mainland China arrive in the CNMI through carriers such as Hong Kong Express, China Eastern Airlines, Sichuan Airlines, and Beijing Capital Airlines.

Carriers such as Jeju Airlines, T'Way Airlines, and Asiana Airlines also bring Chinese travelers to the CNMI transiting through Seoul and Incheon, Republic of Korea. Approximately 700 mainland Chinese passengers arrive in the CNMI per day through these carriers.

CNMI

From Page 1

Torres' executive order directs the Commonwealth Ports Authority to "seek to suspend" both direct and "indirect" travelers from mainland China. Since the CNMI does not have the authority to stop travelers from China from flying to the CNMI without federal consent, this process will be done in collaboration with the airlines, U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

"Indirect" travelers from China refer to travelers who transit through Incheon or elsewhere when coming to the CNMI.

Some countries in Micronesia such as Palau and the Marshall Islands have already imposed travel bans from mainland China.

According to yesterday's emergency declaration, travelers from mainland China to United States destinations and several countries such as Hong Kong, Macau, Thailand, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea "have been identified with nCoV as of Jan. 28, 2020."

"The nCoV poses a significant and imminent threat of harm to the community, environment, and people of the CNMI and this emergency declaration issues in order to respond, quarantine and ensure the prevention of or containment of nCoV in the

CNMI," Torres stated.

Under the directive, CPA shall communicate with all airlines with travelers directly and indirectly from mainland China to suspend the arrival of travelers for the period of this emergency declaration.

The Commonwealth Health Care Corp., which runs the local hospital, the Commonwealth Health Center, is also directed to coordinate with CPA to develop protocols, quarantine measures, and other increased monitoring and control at CNMI airports and seaports as to all arriving travelers, passengers and cargo for screening for nCoV.

Due to the expected decreased tourism income, Torres directed the Finance secretary and the Office of Management and Budget to make a cost-impact analysis and make recommendations within 30 days, for adjustments to the CNMI's fiscal year 2020 budget. The analysis shall be furnished to the Legislature.

The virus has already caused 132 deaths and there are now almost 6,000 confirmed cases in affected countries.

The Torres administration also clarified that, as of Jan. 29, 2020, there are no suspected or confirmed coronavirus cases in the CNMI.

Torres said his administration remains confident that the precautionary measures implemented by CNMI government agencies will ensure proper screening for the coronavirus.

2 women, man arrested for allegedly trafficking 'ice'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

CNMI Drug Enforcement Task Force officers arrested in the past two days two women

and a man for allegedly trafficking methamphetamine or "ice" on Saipan.

Sharleen Arriola, 39, Shuihua Qi, 54, also known as Mindy, and Wei Meng Ling, 27, also known as Brother, were arrested for trafficking of a controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance.

Arriola, Qi, and Ling were brought yesterday before Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan, who imposed a \$100,000 cash bail on each defendant.

Preliminary hearing for Arriola will be on Feb. 5 at 9am,

for Qi on Feb. 4 at 1:30pm, and for Ling on Feb. 7 at 10am.

DETF officer Melvin D. Cadiang stated in his report that a "cooperating source" informed them on Oct. 18, 2019, about Arriola's drug distribution activities.

Cadiang said that, according to the "cooperating source," he/she managed to buy \$40 worth of methamphetamine from Arriola at her home in Susupe last Oct. 17.

DETF officer Samylyn T. Atalig stated in her report that their "cooperating source" was able to purchase \$100 worth of "ice" from Arriola

during a "buy-walk" operation at her residence last Oct. 18, 2019.

Using the same "cooperating source" on Oct. 25, 2019, the task force was allegedly able to buy \$100 worth of "ice" from Arriola during a second "buy-walk" operation in a parking lot of a store in As Lito.

In Qi's case, Cadiang stated in his report that they were able to buy \$1,200 worth of "ice" from Qi in the parking lot of her apartment in Garapan during a "buy-walk" operation last Dec. 19.

Cadiang said they were

able to buy \$1,200 more worth of "ice" from Qi through the same "cooperating source" last Dec. 20 in a parking lot of a poker arcade in Chalan Piao.

In Ling's case, Cadiang said a "cooperating defendant" informed them last Dec. 27 that he/she was able to buy a gram of "ice" from Brother, who was later identified as Ling.

Ling then allegedly offered the "cooperating source" five grams of "ice" for \$2,100.

Cadiang said they were able to buy \$450 worth of "ice" from Ling during a "buy-walk" operation in the parking lot of the hospital last Jan. 9.

Marianas Working Group takes up homeland and food security

Leaders in the CNMI and Guam recently got together in Guam to continue their talks on several issues facing the Marianas today.

House Federal and Foreign Affairs Committee chair Rep. Luis Joh DLG Castro (R-Saipan) said the Marianas Working Group talked about, among others, business, public safety, homeland and food security.

Castro said that they have been working with the Senate, and with their counterparts in the Guam legislature, in coming up with policies that could assist both jurisdictions, through reciprocal legislation that would alleviate some of the difficulties both the CNMI and Guam may have. He cited permits and application processes as an example.

"If you're from Saipan going to Guam, it's like the New York phone book. It can be that thick and a lot of people to work with, as opposed to, say, here [on Saipan]. The processes might be either more difficult or a little bit easier for someone from Guam who wants to move here or do business here," he said. "It's those things that we try our best as legislators, not just of the CNMI, but as legislators of the Marianas. We find that work like that is imperative because we never know whether the policies that are in place now, the status quo, might be detrimental down the line."

Castro also said that they also talked about food security and homeland security.

"Even though a lot of the

threats to security have been focused [on] Guam, it does not mean that we're not going to be affected by them as well. So we've been working really closely with Guam Homeland Security, CNMI Homeland Security, about addressing those matters."

As for food security, the legislator said they have talked about what can be done to sustain food sources in the Marianas, especially with uncontrollable natural and external factors in line.

"We've had two major disasters and Guam knows that feeling as well, because some people there are still dealing with *Pongsona*, a typhoon that hit them two decades ago," Castro said. "It's very important that when it comes time for situations where we don't have power, we don't have water, we need to be able to ensure that we have a ready source of food and water when it's needed. It's not just our food source from the land, it's our food source from the ocean."

The working group was able to meet with members of the Guam fishermen's coop to see what resources can be shared about sustaining the fishery population.

"It's a lot of research sharing, because it's a matter of being responsible...If you don't think of that food source as important, somebody else is going to, so you always have to make sure that you kind of balance that out. We hope that those sharing of resources can help." (Iva Maurin)

Feb. to be named parents' month

Parents will take center stage in February with the designation of the month as National Parent Leadership Month, marking the 16th year of the celebration.

The Division of Youth Services will be hosting the proclamation signing ceremony on Jan. 31 at 10am, at the Kagman Community Center in Kagman.

Parents will be recognized for their leadership and commitment to their roles in the home and community. Within the month, there will be various classes that focus on parents, public events such as a roadside waving, movie nights, and a walkathon.

One of the programs that DYS will offer throughout February is the Parents Anonymous group meetings that will happen every Thursday, from 6pm to 8pm. These group meetings focus on parents helping other parents, but is also available for individu-

als/couples who want to be parents or will be parents, or aunts/uncles who take care of their nieces/nephews and want to enhance their supervision skills. Childcare workers, and anyone else are more than welcomed to join.

According to community development specialist Mary Olopai, "we just want to help parents or future parents get themselves ready with what they're planning to do. This program isn't necessarily to tell you how to be a parent. Our parent leaders are there to help give out advice and it's up to them how to utilize it."

Family and Youth Enhancement Program supervisor Jennifer Tanaka clarified that the PA isn't offered to tell a parent what is wrong or right.

For more information on how you can join, contact Olopai at (670) 237-1015 or Tanaka at (670)237-1023. (Justine Nauta)



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'Two years later, we still have Yutu in the brain'

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Two years after Super Typhoon Yutu hit the CNMI, recovery remains a priority, particularly in the south part of Saipan, where many families are still living in tents as homes await repair and reconstruction, and schools, such as Hopwood Middle School, have yet to revert to normality, according to Rep. Luis John Castro (R-Saipan).

"Even though it's been two years, we still have Yutu in the brain," he said, adding that many legislators are working their hardest to provide assistance to their constituents who are still in need.

"There's a lot of issues that we deal with," he said. "A lot of times, my staff has been looking at how our constituents have been helped out, because even though it's been two years since Yutu, there's still that little stone there, [in terms of] individual assistance."

Up until the present, Castro's office has been help-

ing individuals in processing Federal Emergency Management Agency applications, among others.

"Fortunately, our staff has been very knowledgeable in these matters, not just because of Yutu, but also [Typhoon] Soudelor as well. It's helping them with trying to get all the necessary documents, because sometimes our constituents turn everything in but [get] turned down because [they] miss [certain] documents," Castro added.

Aside from assisting in applications, beautification projects are also being lined up. "In every which way, shape or form, our office has been undertaking some improvement efforts or has played a big role in assisting our other colleagues in those efforts as well. Whether it be cleaning up barriers that have turn into eyesores."

The legislator added that his office helped clean up whatever the relief workers did not get a chance to clean up at Hopwood.

Our office took a very big

step in making sure that, at least until something a little bit more firm was in place, we try our best to give them a hand. We keep in contact with the administration of Hopwood as

well as the other schools that have a request for assistance in that category."

Assistance has also been extended to other schools, such as Saipan Southern High School

and Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, both having had their fair share of damage from the super typhoon. Bus shelters are also being refurbished. The legislator's office has worked

with Guam Sen. Wil Castro, to get assistance, through relief supplies, to those who are still in recovery mode, not just the previous year, but also through the holidays.

Castro wants to assure his constituents that he remains committed to helping them.

500 Sails to offer free lessons in Feb.

The non-profit organization 500 Sails and its adult swim class, Dolphin Swim Club, will be offering water sports lessons for the community, whether you have experience or not, throughout February to promote a healthy and active lifestyle.

"I'm most excited for the Sirena project," said Emma Perez, co-founder of 500 Sails

and Dolphin Swim Club. "This is something that our girls, especially our women, can do to benefit their health since they're already busy taking care of others."

According to Perez, the Sirena project targets women and girls who are over 12 years old; the classes will be every Saturday in February from 10am to 11am.

Lalāyak, which translates to learning to sail, is a beginner's guide to sailing a Chamorro canoe. That class will be offered every Saturday in February, from 9am to noon for the morning sessions and 1pm to 4pm for the afternoon sessions.

The *lalāyak* program is an accelerated class that is made up of six lessons: three les-

sons will be on land and the other three lessons will be in the ocean. Ten practice sails, which will be led by captains-in-trainings, will also be available. This class will be taught by Cecilio Raiukilipiy and Pete Perez, along with other *lalāyak* graduates.

According to Perez, you have to pass a swimming test on the first day to participate in the *lalāyak* program. The test, which is not timed, will include swimming to the closest tank near the Guma Sakman, which is one of 500 Sails' main office in Susupe, then swim back using any stroke without stopping. The test will also require the students to tread water, a technique you use with your legs to keep your head above water, for an hour.

Other programs available is the Gamsung project that is for the youth, K-12, on Fridays, from 2pm to 4pm on Feb. 7 and Feb. 28 and the Dolphin Club Saipan Monday wake up swims, which is for adults, including beginners, that will be available every Monday and will start at 6am. All classes are free.

For more information, email: info@500sails.org, call Emma Perez at (670)285-4268, follow their Facebook page, www.facebook.com/500sails, or visit their website at www.500sails.org. (Justine Nauta)



ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

Graduates of the Adult Basic Education Program at Northern Marianas College on Rota pose for a group photo with NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico. This is the third cohort of the graduates that completed the Adult Basic Education program. For more information on the program at NMC, visit marianas.edu.

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

INVITATION TO BID

ITB NO.: ITB20-BECQ/DEQ-039

SUBMISSION DATE: FEBRUARY 25, 2020 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) CLASS "F" PICK-UP TRUCK
FOR THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY,
DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ELI D. CABRERA
ADMINISTRATOR OF BECQ

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (1-670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com •
Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

NOTICE OF EMERGENCY MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) Board of Directors hereby gives notice that a special emergency meeting is being called on **Thursday, January 30, 2020, at 9:00a.m.** in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom at the Airport Fire Station located at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on the island of Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

- I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS**
 1. Call to Order
 2. Roll Call
 3. Adoption of Agenda
 4. Adoption of Minutes (December 20, 2019)
- II. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)**
- III. SPECIAL MEETING ITEM:**
 1. CNMI Governor's Emergency Declaration re: Coronavirus Outbreak
- IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION (if needed)**
- V. MISCELLANEOUS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- VI. ADJOURNMENT**

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items.

KIMBERLYN KING-HINDS
Chairwoman, Board of Directors

January 29, 2020

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

INVITATION TO BID

ITB NO.: DPW20-ITB-008

SUBMISSION DATE: February 18, 2020 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"Proposed Demolition of Existing Social Hall
Building at Chalan Kanoa District No. 3, Saipan**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at DPW Technical Services Division required for each set.

There will be a Pre-bid Conference for this project on **February 5, 2020, 9:00 a.m.** local time at the Project site, Chalan Kanoa District No. 3, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **February 11, 2020** to Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JAMES A. ADA
SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

**Northern Marianas College
Procurement and Property Management**

P.O. Box 501250 • Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Phone: (670) 234-5498 Ext. 6804 • Fax: (670) 234-1270
www.marianas.edu

INVITATION FOR BIDS
NMC IFB 20-0001

GROUND CARE & LANDSCAPING SERVICES

Northern Marianas College (The College) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement of Campus Grounds Care & Landscaping Services for the As Terlaje Campus, Saipan.

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. O, commencing Monday, January 27, 2020 between the hours of 9:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m. Email request may be sent to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Pre-bid conference is scheduled for February 04th, 2020 at 09:00am, Bldg P. College Conference, attendance is strongly recommended.

Bid Submissions are due no later than 10:00 a.m., February 12, 2020, at Northern Marianas College, Procurement Office, Bldg O, As Terlaje Campus, Saipan, MP 96950.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The College reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response to this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC.

/s/ Anita Camacho
Procurement Management Office

The Northern Marianas College is a Land Grant Institution accredited by the Senior College and University Commission of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges.

E-teachers meet to further improve online learning

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Online teachers across the Commonwealth gathered at the Saipan Southern High School campus over the weekend to map out ways to improve online learning for students in the Northern Marianas.

The Instructional Tech & Distance Ed Program hosted its Continuous Improvement Workshop, held after every semester, last Saturday to review student evaluation data, share best practices, and learn new tech tools—all with the goal of sharpening online learning as the Public School System enters the spring 2020 term.



Public School System eTeachers pose for a photo following their workshop last Saturday at the Saipan Southern High School campus.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

workshop is for online teachers to come together at the end of each term to reflect on areas of strength and discuss rooms for improvement.

“We are able to refine courses each term to offer high quality instruction to all of our online learners,” she said.

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, who was also at the workshop, reminded the online teaching team of the importance of their role. “The work you all do is so important, and I want to thank you all for your commitment to our students who take online courses,” he said.

The Instructional Technology & Distance Education Program is among one of the largest programs in the CNMI Public School System, with multiple technology-based learning supports and initiatives for students.

Its goal is to provide access to quality online educational experiences to support digital learners across the CNMI.

The program’s Student Portal Branch provides high school online learning opportunities for private and public schools students throughout the Marianas, serving nearly 2000 students annually.

Dr. Bobby Cruz and Lorraine Catienza, Instructional Technology & Distance Education Program leaders, led the workshop.

According to Cruz, the program is always excited to meet with e-teachers because they’re the backbone of the success of the program.

“It’s important to gather and reflect on our practices, especially those that are instructional, and set goals that will help our students more effectively learn online,” he said.

Catienza explained that the

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Our Lady of Lourdes novena set

The Santa Lourdes Community in AsTeo has announced that the novena in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes will begin on Feb. 7 and will end on Feb. 15. From Feb. 7 to Feb. 14, the rosary and novena will start at 5pm at the Santa Lourdes Shrine in AsTeo. On Saturday, Feb. 15, the day of the fiesta, the rosary will be said at pm, followed by the novena, and the Mass will

be held at 3pm at the Shrine. Procession will follow after the Mass. **(PR)**

Veterans Affairs Resource Fair set

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is having a Veterans Resource Fair hosted by VA Pacific Islands Health Care System acting director Kevin Amick and Honolulu Veterans Benefits Regional Office director Sergio S. Chao.

This is to share information

and resources, hear feedback from veterans and to answer questions on VA health care and benefits.

The Veterans Resource Fair on Saipan will take place on Feb. 4, 2020, from 5pm to 6:30pm at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe near the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library.


The Listening Sessions on Tinian and Rota will be held on the following dates and time:

■ Tinian: Feb. 5, 2020, from 10am to 12:30 pm at the Tinian Library.

■ Rota: Feb. 6, 2020, from 10am to 12:30pm at the Mayor of Rota’s conference hall.

All veterans, their families, survivors and any organization(s) or individual(s) who works with or on behalf of veterans are encouraged to attend.

For more information, contact Ruth Coleman at 322-0035. **(PR)**



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CUC-RFP-20-009

WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), Office of the Executive Director, is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified insurance firms to provide workers' compensation insurance and administration for CUC's employees throughout the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and when on official business away from the CNMI.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 for one RFP package set.

One (1) Original and Six (6) Hard Copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked “CUC-RFP-20-009, Workers' Compensation & Administration”, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than February 14, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST)**. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered. Proposals mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposer due to lack of information or understanding of the RFP requirements in the course of proposer's preparation of the RFP under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the RFP under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 31, 2020** to **Manny B. Sablan**, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to **Vivian Santos**, CUC Human Resource Manager, via email vivian.santos@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said RFP, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE OFFICE

DR-4235 | DR-4396 | DR-4404

RFQ20-GOV/PA-043

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS

Design and Project Management Services for the Public Assistance Office

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold L. Palacios, through the Public Assistance Office, (collectively, “Commonwealth”), are soliciting sealed proposals from Architectural and Engineering firms to provide Design and Project Management Services for awarded Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance Program funded projects.

Procurement procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001, or latest revision thereof. Public Law 15-95 (Local Preference Act) as amended by Public Law 15-118 does not apply to this federally funded project. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

Selected firms will be retained as independent contractors under general provision of the Contracting Officer or his/her designee. Firms will act as agents of the expenditure authority on assigned Public Assistance projects to ensure that identified objectives are achieved within cost, time and legal requirements while maintaining effective stakeholder communications. Selected firms will be retained on a two-year contract with an option to renew for an additional 2 years at the discretion of the Commonwealth.

Compensation for services will be determined based on the requirements of the assigned projects including payments for approved staff and expenses. Selected firms would be precluded from providing any other services outside the scope of services associated with the assigned projects.

Interested parties may pick up the applicable scope of work and submittal requirements from the CNMI Public Assistance Office located at the Juan A. Sablan Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, CNMI, or request via electronic mail to Patrick C. Guerrero (pguerrero@pa.gov.mp) beginning January 24, 2020.

A pre-proposal meeting will be held on January 31, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. at the Office of the Governor Conference Room, Juan A. Sablan Building in Capitol Hill, Saipan.

Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330 or the latest version of Standard Forms. Statement of Qualifications will be evaluated and scored based on the following criteria:

1. Qualification of Firm and/or Personnel.....40%
2. Experience in Design and Project Management.....40%
3. Work Load.....20%

Discussions shall be conducted with the top three (3) ranked firms or with all the firms. After selections are made, negotiations will be conducted with firms to determine the final fair and reasonable price of the contract for the work to be performed. The selection process shall be guided by § 70-30.3-305 of the CNMI Procurement Regulations and any other section related to contracts for the requested services.

Qualifications statements must be sealed and marked “RFQ20-GOV/PA-043, Design and Project Management Services for the Public Assistance Office.” For firms within the CNMI, one (1) original and four (4) copies of the qualifications statement must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP, no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on **February 7, 2020**. Proposers located outside the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a Notice of Intent to Propose. Notices of Intent to Propose must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 7, 2020 and may be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to a.magofna@dof.gov.mp. For proposers located outside the CNMI, one (1) original and four (4) copies of the sealed qualifications statement must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than February 7, 2020 and must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 14, 2020. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies of the proposal may cause for rejection of a proposal.

Questions regarding this RFQ20-GOV/PA-043 may be submitted in writing to Patrick C. Guerrero, Public Assistance Officer, at pguerrero@pa.gov.mp no later than February 3, 2020.

Gratuities. It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give or agree to give any employee or former employee, or for any employee or former employee to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a program requirement or a purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter, pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract or to any solicitation or proposal therefor. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-p725(a).

Kickbacks. It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any payment, gratuity or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor or any person associated therewith as an inducement for the award of subcontractor or order. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(b).

Contingent Fees. It shall be a breach of ethical standards for a person to be retained, or to retain a person, to solicit or secure government contracts upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage or contingent fee, except for retention of bona fide employees or bona fide established commercial selling agencies for the purpose of securing business. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-730.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in any proposal if, in its opinion to do so, would be in the best interests of the CNMI government. All proposals shall become the sole property of the CNMI government.

Virginia C. Villagomez
Governor's Authorized Representative

Francisco C. Aguon
Acting Director, Procurement & Supply

Eva Villar is named MCS Teacher of the Year

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Science teacher Eva Villar was recognized as Mount Carmel School's Teacher of the Year during a school program last Tuesday that was part of the celebration of Catholic Schools' Week.

According to Villar, who has been teaching 7th, 8th, and 9th grade science for the past three years at MCS, this was the first year she was nominated and awarded the Teacher of the Year award.

"Actually, getting nominated is already an honor and a blessing, more so being chosen to be Teacher of the Year, so I feel very happy," she said.

Villar said she was not expecting to win since all the teachers she was up against were also great.

"I was really anxious and nervous. I didn't expect to win because we are all great teachers and everyone is really doing their best," she said.

MCS also recognized Leeani Villagomez as its Support Staff of the Year, while the Perfect Attendance awards were given to Zhen Zhu "Pearl" Jin, and Frances San Nicholas.

Villar, who graduated with a bachelor's degree in Chemistry from the University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines, said she developed a passion for teaching when she worked as a chemist for a manufacturing



Mount Carmel School chemistry teacher Eva Villar is named the school's Teacher of the Year last Tuesday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

company in the Philippines.

During her career as a chemist and a quality assurance manager, she was asked to conduct trainings and learned to love being a mentor to others and to share her knowledge about chemistry.

"I developed a passion for teaching and whenever I see participant learning from me, it gives me that heart to teach more because I want people to learn something," she said.

Villar said she started her teaching career with MCS back in 2017 after her hus-

band passed away and, since she was already a devoted MCS parent, it was an easy transition for her to share her services with the school.

"When my husband passed away in 2017, I decided to teach. I was an active parent in Mount Carmel School because of my son, so I've been helping the school and I knew I wanted give my talent to the MCS family," she said.

Arousing the curiosity of her students is what gives her the motivation to do more in her teaching career.

"Whenever I see the students... understand the lessons and apply it in their daily lives, it's enough motivation and is an accomplishment," she said.

Jan. 26 to Feb. 1 is Catholic Schools Week

By **JUSTINE NAUTA**
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

This last week of January has been declared Catholic Schools Week, with Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios designating Jan. 26 to Feb. 1 for the occasion in a proclamation singing last Jan. 25 at the Mount Carmel Cathedral.

The two leading Catholic schools in the CNMI are the Mount Carmel School in Susupe and the San Francisco de Borja on Rota. Both schools have lined up a series of activities this week to celebrate the occasion.

Mount Carmel School kicked off Catholic Schools Week last Sunday, Jan. 26, with a Mass. On Monday, the school's students, faculty, and staff held a beach cleanup, helped organize the Joeten Kiyu Public Library, cleaned

the volleyball court, decorated the stage, and planted trees and flowers to beautify the MCS campus.

Tuesday was about appreciating the MCS faculty, staff, and administrators with students giving them appreciation letters and cards, followed by an award ceremony that recognized science teacher Eva Villar as the school's Teacher of the Year 2020 and Leeani Villagomez as the Support Staff of the Year.

Last Wednesday saw vocational talks, Jeopardy-style Bible games, and Big Brother Big Sister matchups for poster making on assigned themes.

Today, Jan. 30, the school will have lessons on patriotism, followed by an annual video filming.

Tomorrow, Jan. 31, there will be a roadside waving at



Students and representatives of Mount Carmel School are present for the signing of the proclamation for Catholic Schools Week that was signed by Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, third from left, front row, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral in Susupe last Jan. 24.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

7:45am, a student field day at 8:30am and Family Night celebration that will recognize the Parents of the Year.

On Feb. 1, the school will recognize their alumni with a special event called "Night with the Knights."

9 Da'ok Academy students secure spots to graduate in June

By **JUSTINE NAUTA**
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Nine students of Da'ok Academy High School, which is an Alternative Education Program, have already completed their requirements that will allow them to graduate this June 2020.

The students are Jovanavin Dela Cruz, Guillermo Itibus, Katherine Johnson, Markisha Manalo, Seirrumwi Maggie Nekaifes, Andruw Omelau, Jake Rabauliman, Mikaela Siksei, and Allison Sumor.

In a ceremony last Jan. 28 at Kanoa Resort, AEP director Jonathan Aguon said that alternative schools have a negative stigma but he said this must be dispelled. "These students are able to perform and achieve but they have 'needs' that can be addressed better in a smaller environment," he said.



Da'ok Academy students pose with Alternative Education Program director Jonathan Aguon and Northern Marianas Technical Institute chief executive officer Agnes M. McPhetres, fourth from left, at the Da'ok Academy graduation last Jan. 28 at Kanoa Resort Saipan in Susupe.

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, who was also present at the occasion, said, "These students are very special to me. They met us

halfway, because we try to help them move forward in life. We prepare them to be career- or college-ready and they're ready."

Also present Tuesday was guest speaker John Sanchez, who is a former teacher at Kagman High School. "You've got your back against

the wall and you have to start 10 steps behind [but] I see it as an opportunity to break down the wall," Sanchez said, "and prove the world wrong 10

times through. So I ask you today, how far are you willing to go? Are you [going to stay] here where you started or will you go beyond that wall?"

Other than the nine students, other Da'ok Academy students were also awarded certificates such as top student in U.S. government, U.S. history, science, exceptional performance in math, outstanding improvement in math, most helpful in math, most improved in language arts, highest star reading growth, academic excellence in language arts, top performance in Co-op, most athletic shark, and school citizenship award.

"I just want to send out the message that the Da'ok Academy that we provide is extra attention and support for the students within [the Public School System]," said Aguon. "The goal is to work together to support this system for the students to be successful."



Korean students of the MBC Global Camp pose with Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang, sixth from left third row, and special assistant to the mayor Henry Hofschneider, first from left first row, at the Saipan Mayor's Office in Susupe last Jan. 28.
JUSTINE NAUTA

More students call on Apatang as part of a monthlong program

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Over 29 students from South Korea who are on island to participate in a monthlong English program, called on Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang last Jan. 28 and were presented with certificates of appreciation for participating in a beach cleanup at the Sugar Dock last Jan. 18.

The students, who are from the third to ninth grade, came to Saipan under the MBC Global Camp that is being coordinated by the Samsamo company.

The students, who arrived last Jan. 4, are studying English at the Northern Marianas International School in Susupe, according to one of the teachers, You Jihyun.

In his meeting with the students, Apatang encouraged them to take a lot of pictures so that they can persuade their family and friends to take vacations in the CNMI.

When asked by one of the students about the hardest part of being a mayor, Apatang replied: "The hardest job that gives me the most headaches would be typhoons. Our people suffer from no gas, no water, and no power, so we have to find ways to help our community."

Another question was, "How often does a mayor change?" Apatang replied,

"[Every] four years but you can be a mayor for eight years." He also added that he has been a mayor for five years and is now on the first year of his second term.

The students were accompanied at the Saipan Mayor's Office by three teachers and one coordinator.

Melvin & Carmelita Faisao
P.O. Box 505613
Saipan MP 96950
Phone: 256-8081

Petitioners

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE)
ADOPTION OF B.B.S.I.L.) FCD-AD
a minor child) 19-0529
by)
MELVIN &) NOTICE OF
CARMELITA FAISAO,) HEARING
Petitioners)

Notice is hereby given that a verified petition was filed in the above-entitled court for a Petition of Adoption of the minor child B.B.S.I.L. by Melvin & Carmelita Faisao, the Petitioners. The original petition is available for review at the Office of the Clerk of Court in Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A hearing on the above-entitled matter will be held on February 10, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. in the Superior Court, Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 27th day of December, 2019

/s/ Clerk of the Superior Court

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
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NOTICE OF BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that there will be a Joint Airport and Financial Affairs Committee Meeting on Thursday, January 30, 2020, beginning 9:30 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located in the Airport Fire Station at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on the island of Saipan.

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (Airport and Finance - November 01, 2019)
- II. Public Comments
- III. Old Business:
 1. Airport Operators Committee Updates/Report
 2. Business Gross Revenue Tax (BGRT)
 3. Airline Users Agreement
 4. Star Marianas Air
 5. Saipan International Airport Improvements (Ad hoc) Committee
 6. Saipan Airport CPA Accounting/CIQ Office Renovations – A&E Design Services
 7. Solar Updates
 8. CUC Water well near Tandem Skydive
 9. General Aviation Updates
 10. Electronic Signboard
- IV. New Business:
 1. Mobil
 2. Rota Concession Consultation Services
 3. Fiscal Year 2018 Audit
 4. Supplemental Budget Request – Delta Dock Repairs
 5. Supplemental Budget Request – Rota Airport Drainage Improvement
 6. Miscellaneous Fees
 7. Bond Issuance
 8. Procurement Rules and Regulations
 9. Helicopter Concerns
 10. CUC Power Plant 3
 11. Lease Renewal/Amendment:
 - a. American Red Cross
 - b. POI Aviation
 - c. Star Marianas Air – Fuel
 - d. Star Marianas Air – Hangar
 12. Boutique Air/TSA
 13. Financial Affairs Committee Report
 14. Airport Facilities Committee Report

- V. Executive Session (if needed)
- VI. Miscellaneous/Announcements
- VII. Adjournment

Persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the agenda items. A time limit may be imposed for oral testimony.

Barrie C. Toves
Airport Facilities Committee Chair

Ramon A. Tebuteb
Financial Affairs Committee Chair

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

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NOTICE OF BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that Board Committees on Seaport Facilities and Personnel Affairs will be holding special meetings on Friday, January 31, 2020, beginning 9:30 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located in the Airport Fire Station at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on the island of Saipan.

AGENDA

SEAPORT FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (October 31, 2019)
- II. Public Comments
- III. Old Business:
 1. Seaport Police Boat
 2. A/E design for Seaport Ramp Paving
 3. Echo Dock - Evaluation Plan
 4. Asia-Pacific Ship Investment Inc.
 5. Industrial Drive
 6. Tinian Marine Stevedore
- IV. New Business:
 1. Rota Seaport Restroom
 2. Pacific Subsea
 3. Saipan Stevedore Lease
 4. Updated Committee Report
- V. Executive Session (if needed)
- VI. Miscellaneous/Announcements
- VII. Adjournment

PERSONNEL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (December 20, 2019)
- II. Public Comments
- III. Old Business:
 1. Organizational Chart
 2. Additional staff: IT
- IV. New Business:
 1. Employment Contract – Rota Ports Manager
 2. Employment Contract – Port of Saipan Manager
 3. Resolution for Former Board Chairman †Rex I. Palacios
 4. Updated Committee Report
- V. Executive Session (if needed)
- VI. Miscellaneous/Announcements
- VII. Adjournment

Persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the agenda items. A time limit may be imposed.

Pete P. Reyes
Seaport Facilities Committee Chair

Joseph M. Diaz
Personnel Affairs Committee Chair

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The Kobe Bryant community

The news of Kobe Bryant's death flashed early Sunday afternoon and immediately emptied the day. Bryant was a professional basketball superstar among superstars—an inspiration to people of all ages, an ambassador for the game and for his Los Angeles community. But it didn't necessarily matter how directly acquainted you were with that legacy. You knew from the initial news coverage that he was too young, at 41, for his life to end. You knew he had a family, whose shock and pain you could imagine as if it were your own, a feeling that only intensified when it became known that one of his young daughters was with him when the helicopter crashed.

People die tragically every day, including seven others in that crash, and the pain is felt acutely in their circles. But there is something different about a prominent death—of a Kobe, of a Prince—that pulls a disparate world of people together, to mourn what has been collectively lost and to celebrate what was shared.

Kobe Bryant played for 20 seasons in the NBA, straight from high school in 1996 to his retirement in 2016, and he won five championships with the Lakers. His name is literally synonymous with scoring. People are known to utter "Kobe" when tossing any object into any receptacle.

But not even role models live perfect lives. Bryant's reputation was marred in 2003 by a sexual assault allegation that ultimately was settled out of court. It's tempting, at a time like this, to downplay or even omit the negative. But every life remembered is a life from which we learn, and for that we need the full measure.

Above all, news like this is a reminder of how quickly, for any of us, things can change—sometimes because of choices we've made. Those of us in a place like Minnesota, specifically, may recall decisions of whether to keep travel plans during poor weather. It was not immediately determined whether thick fog in Southern California caused Sunday's crash, but the conditions certainly heightened the danger of helicopter flight, a mode of travel Bryant preferred. Bryant coached his 13-year-old daughter Gianna's basketball club, and they were believed to be en route to one of her games. It was important to go. But worth the risk? Not this time, no.

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Will there ever be common ground on gun laws?

Arare thing happened in the California Legislature the other day. A gun-rights bill passed.

Granted, it was a relatively minor measure carried by a Republican lawmaker to fix what he said was a flaw in the law that unfairly jeopardized law-abiding gun owners.

The bill was passed unanimously by the Democratic-controlled state Senate and sent to the Assembly, which is also dominated by Democrats.

It would be a fool's errand to suggest this could be a harbinger of potential common ground on one of the most polarizing issues in the nation.

Still, it serves as a launching point to look at other signs that maybe—just maybe—there could be room for agreement on broader gun policies. After all, the state Legislature is known for passing some of the most restrictive gun laws in the nation, not protecting gun-owner rights, no matter how incrementally.

Senate Bill SB 723 was proposed by Sen. Brian Jones, a San-tee Republican who is on the volunteer advisory board of the San Diego County Gun Owners Association.

Jones said a policy was inserted into the state budget that could cause an otherwise-legal gun owner to be brought up on felony charges if a warrant was issued against him or her, even if the individual didn't know about it. His bill clarifies that a person with a pending warrant must be aware of it before he or she can be arrested on a firearms-related charge.

"It's the intersection of criminal justice reform and the Second Amendment," said Jones, explaining why his bill gained such broad support.

Jones, who is running for Congress, said the measure restores due process rights. Given the vote, it clearly made sense to a lot of lawmakers who support gun control.

But, on the flip side, a lot of people support further gun regulations, and they're not just Democrats and people who don't own firearms. Some gun owners and even members of the National Rifle Association support various enhanced restrictions.

That's according to a handful of surveys in recent years that suggest more potential for common ground than you'd think listening to the polarized debate between gun-control and gun-rights groups.

Now, don't hold your breath for a "Kumbaya" moment, but it seems something is there.

A national survey conducted last year by John Hopkins University's Center for Gun Policy and Research "found that 84% of all respondents believe that first-time gun buyers should be required to pass a safety course on the safe handling and storage

By **MICHAEL SMOLENS**

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Michael Smolens is a columnist for The San Diego Union-Tribune with a long history of political coverage.



of a firearm," according to the Los Angeles Times. "Close to three-quarters of gun owners surveyed shared this view."

More than 60% of gun owners supported setting a minimum age of 21 for Americans to be able to own a semi-automatic rifle, according to the research.

An article from Bloomberg News said 69% of NRA members expressed support for comprehensive background checks in a 2018 survey by Giffords Law Center, a gun-control advocacy group.

At the same time, there's wariness.

"Among members of the (NRA), 79% expressed concern that a regulation such as increased background checks or a firearms purchase registry could be used to track the activities of Americans," according to the Bloomberg piece, published in 2018.

Gun owners also oppose banning military-style, semi-automatic assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, but not by a large majority, according to research by the American Journal of Public Health. Just over 40% of gun owners support either ban, the journal said.

While legislation to implement expanded background checks and other gun measures nationwide are stalled in Congress, California already has similar regulations on the books.

So, it's no surprise that gun-rights leaders in the state feel like they're fighting a rearguard action.

Michael Schwartz, executive director of the San Diego County Gun Owners, said his group is unfairly depicted by gun-control groups.

"We're not calling for people to get rid of every gun law," he said.

Schwartz said his members are "run-of-the-mill San Diegos."

Ron Marcus, spokesman for San Diegos for Gun Violence Prevention, said members of his group are also everyday people.

"We're like 90% of Americans who want sensible gun laws passed," Marcus said.

See **GUN LAWS** on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

How Auschwitz has united Muslims and Jews

By MOHAMMAD AL-ISSA and DAVID HARRIS
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

We come from very different backgrounds. One of us is a Muslim, born and raised in Saudi Arabia, a country where Islam is the official religion and the vast majority of the population shares the same faith. There is no local Jewish community and no direct connection to World War II.

The other is a Jew, born and raised in a secular United States, exposed to few Muslims during his formative years. His life was shaped by the events of World War II and the experiences of his parents, both Holocaust survivors.

Yet on Jan. 23, we stood together with united resolve in the face of history's greatest horror, the Holocaust, at the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp where more than 1 million Jews perished. Never again. Not for Jews. Not for Muslims. Not for any of God's children.

We have come together, believing that the world desperately needs greater interfaith understanding and cooperation. The terrible attacks on Jews in Pittsburgh; San Diego; Jersey City, New Jersey; Monsey, New York; and Halle, Germany; the genocide against the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar and the massacre of Muslim worshippers in Christchurch, New Zealand; and the wanton killing of Christians celebrating Easter in Sri Lanka demonstrate the global threat we are all facing.

Within our own communities, we both have been confronting fear, distrust and ignorance of the other. When we met last April, we recognized the interconnectedness of our missions. Our organizations, the Muslim World League and American Jewish Committee, signed an agreement to "make the 21st century an era of harmony and friendship" that unites our communities against all attempts to divide us by race, faith, nationality or ethnicity.

Words are important, but insufficient. The ultimate test is action.

That explains why we co-headed a joint Jewish-Muslim delegation to Auschwitz to mark the 75th anniversary of the Nazi German camp's liberation. At a site of unconscionable pain, the images of Jews and Muslims praying in their own manner and to the same God should give the world hope that adherents of both faiths are determined to build a more humane and harmonious tomorrow.

The visit marked the most senior Islamic delegation ever to visit Auschwitz, including Muslim leaders from more than two dozen countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North America. But it ought to represent a seminal moment for Jews as well, a reminder that both our faiths compel us to act

against injustice.

In Hebrew, we speak of "tikkun olam." In Arabic, "islah." Each demands of us to repair the world through education and action, among our own communities and through partnerships such as ours.

Our presence at Auschwitz was as much about the present as the past.

The Holocaust reminds us of the human capacity for inhumanity, depravity and bestiality. Two-thirds of European Jewry was destroyed. But the Nazis directed their supremacist ideology at Slavs, Roma, people of color, the handicapped and many others.

Seventy-five years later, it would be naive of us to believe we are immune to the possibility of another industrialized genocide fueled by ideological extremism. Left unchecked, the forces of evil could threaten any minority community, anywhere.

As the last remaining survivors and liberators pass on, we have a shared stake in ensuring the lessons of Auschwitz do not disappear with them. To forget would be to invite a new Auschwitz. We must not forget. We dare not forget.

Visiting Auschwitz is an important education for anyone who wants to build a better world. It cannot begin to fully convey the agony of those who were imprisoned, tortured and dehumanized

within—the fear, hunger, disease, loneliness, family separation, indignities, exhaustion and, ultimately, death. But it is a start.

Together, we saw the shoes, suitcases, eyeglasses, prosthetics, hair and shaving brushes, pots and pans, and other belongings of those deported to this accursed place, led to believe it was for relocation, not annihilation. The stark barracks with bare, three-tiered bunk beds, once overflowing with skeletal, lice-infested, terrorized women, men and children. The remnants of the gas chambers and crematoria. The execution walls and hanging sites. The train tracks that brought people packed in suffocating cattle cars. And where Nazi doctors performed medical experiments that are an eternal abomination of science.

These 1.1 million people murdered in Auschwitz were human beings, each with his or her own story, their world brutally cut short.

As Muslim and as Jew, we remember them. And we honor their memories by bearing witness, linking arms and saying, "Never again."

Mohammad Al-Issa is the secretary general of the Muslim World League. David Harris is the CEO of the American Jewish Committee.

Kobe Bryant and other athletes are the superheroes black kids don't see in movies

By SEDRICK SMITH
THE BALTIMORE SUN

Many kids grew up watching superheroes: superhuman figures who possess special abilities to overcome the odds. Whether it was Superman speeding faster than a locomotive or Spiderman leaping from a skyscraper, many of us dreamed of having the power to save the day. Superheroes give us hope, the hope that we can do the impossible. The hope that we can be great.

But up until recently, for many black children there was something missing in the superheroes we saw onscreen. They almost never looked like us. Superman, Batman, Spiderman, heck even Aquaman, were all white. While we still donned their costumes for Halloween, in the back of our collective minds, we all knew that they were not us and we were not them. I could never look like Clark Kent or Peter Parker. My tightly coiled hair certainly never flowed in the wind like Thor's. Those superheroes were not our superheroes.

Where the movie screen failed us, sports filled the gaps. Black athletes like Michael Jordan and Ken Griffey Jr. soared above the rim and scaled tall walls to catch fly balls. They were giants, literally, with seemingly superhuman talents to dunk, dribble and hit a ball unbelievable distances. And if we were lucky enough, we'd get a chance to don their costumes too, mimicking their signature moves, flipping our hats to the back and yelling their names while trying to become them.

By the time I became a sports fanatic, Jordan was fading and a new superhero was emerging: Kobe Bryant. He even looked a little like M.J.—tall and lean, fearless when driving to the basket against the giant monsters in the paint. Heck he even had the same signature tongue wag early on. But Kobe was different. He was relentless. He seemed to never get tired, and you could watch a game for five minutes and see that no one on the court wanted to win a game as much as he did. Every play mattered, and it was inspiring.

Most superheroes possess special traits that we as mere mortals could never acquire. But Kobe's special traits were primarily between his ears. He thought the game, he studied it and he was willing to outwork anyone to achieve victory.

He had the "Mamba mentality." You could literally see it. His eyebrows curled, his face scowled; it was like the Hulk turning green. When the Mamba showed up, all bets were off. I'd never seen a superhero like this one, a superhero whose greatest trait was his will to win.

Like most superheroes, Kobe was flawed. His transgressions in Colorado, where he was accused of sexually assaulting a woman in 2003, were well documented. It could have marked the end of his story, but instead it became the turning point. He switched jerseys and got back into the gym, determined to outwork everyone else. When critics claimed he couldn't win without his superhero partner Shaq, he proved them wrong, changing his game and style and winning multiple championships on his own.

Eventually, Kobe got older and, like many players, lost some of his skill and a new wave of superheroes (LeBron James, Stephen Curry, Kevin Durant) readied to take his place. But flashes of his supernatural gifts remained. In his last game ever, the old superhero donned his cape one last time, scoring 60 points, riding off into the sunset.

Sports often fill gaps for us that we don't even realize we have. They help us heal, they bring us incredible joy and sometimes inconsolable losses. While I've always preferred sports to movies, it's because the characters in sports are real. They control the storylines. They inspire us and make us imagine what it would be like to be a real-life superhero. They give us hope.

I never met Kobe, but watching him was inspiring. Watching him with his daughters, watching him resurrect his relationship with his wife and watching him find peace and success after basketball when so many other athletes fail. As long as sports exist, little black boys and girls who don't get to see themselves fly

on the movie screen can see themselves soar on television in sports arenas. And that matters.

Like so many fans, I'm heartbroken that one of our black superheroes met his end. But I am grateful to have had the experience of watching Kobe put on his purple and gold cape and let us know that we all are capable of being super if we work hard enough for it.

Sedrick Smith (sedricksmith@gmail.com) is a social studies teacher and director of admissions at Baltimore City College.



GUN LAWS

From Page 10

Both men had less charitable views of the other group.

"I do view them as on the extreme end of the spectrum," Marcus said of San Diego County Gun Owners.

"They're way out of the mainstream," Schwartz said of San Diegans for Gun Violence Prevention. "They're extremists."

Marcus said his organization has had positive interactions with some gun owners; Schwartz said the same about some people favoring gun control.

Not long ago, an effort was made to bring people on both sides together.

Schwartz said conflict resolution experts reached out to his group to see if they were willing to try training sessions along with some gun-control advocates. Marcus said the latter group was not officially representing San Diegans for Gun Violence Prevention. Separate sessions were held with the facilitators, but things fell apart before combined progress could be made.

The versions of what happened differ, and at this point, that's not really relevant.






Sen. Jones said the effort was laudable, but thought there was a simpler way.

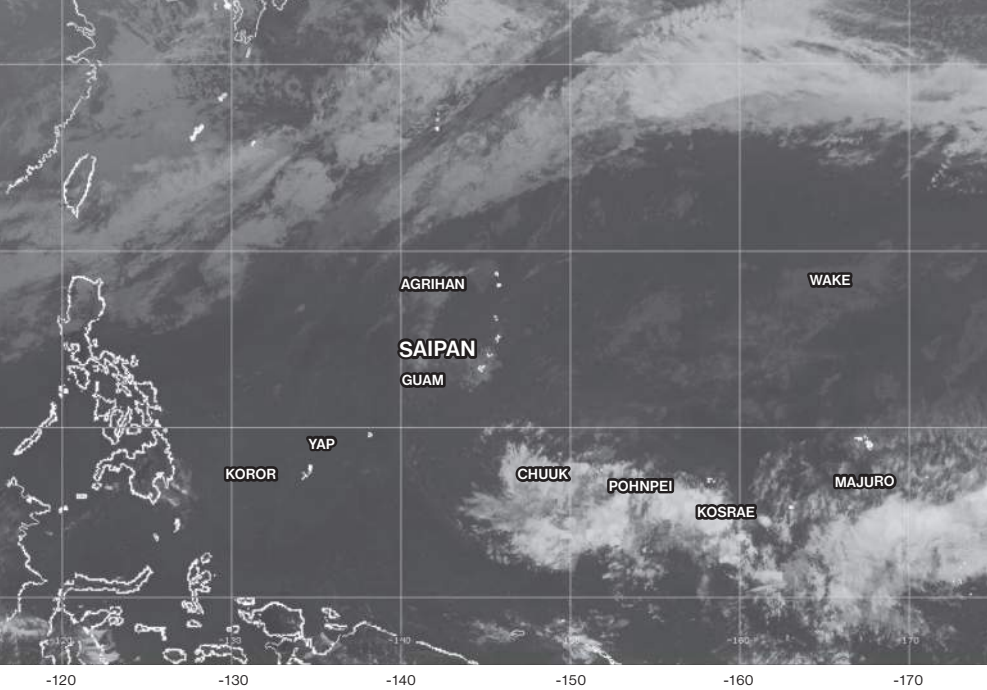
"I think the better approach is for each side to spend more time with the other side, walking in their shoes, so to speak," he said.

He said that might entail taking gun-control supporters to a firing range and having gun owners visit with people who want more restrictions—perhaps victims of gun violence.

Understanding why people on the other side think the way they do couldn't hurt.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
									
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 5 to 15 mph.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	
87°	76°	87°	76°	88°	76°	87°	75°	87°	75°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 6:57 AM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite and radar show scattered showers near Guam from a passing trade-wind disturbance. Isolated showers are present near Rota and northward. Seas remain between 5 and 7 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	83° / 75°	
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 77°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Sunny	75° / 66°	
Beijing	Sunny	46° / 23°	
Hong Kong	Sunny	64° / 59°	
Honolulu	Cloudy	82° / 69°	
London	Showers	55° / 50°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	78° / 52°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	86° / 73°	
Melbourne	Sunny	99° / 73°	
Miami	Mostly Sunny	78° / 66°	
New York	Mostly Cloudy	38° / 30°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	48° / 39°	
Paris	Showers	54° / 52°	
Busan	Mostly Cloudy	52° / 39°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	61° / 48°	
Salem	Partly Cloudy	61° / 42°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	60° / 49°	
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	45° / 25°	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	54° / 39°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	42° / 29°	



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
4:55 AM	LOW TIDE	0.07	
11:35 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.58	
5:52 PM	LOW TIDE	0.71	
10:52 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.31	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:46 AM	6:13 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:14 PM
Saturday	6:46 AM	6:14 PM
Sunday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Monday	6:45 AM	6:15 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	10:15 AM	10:32 PM	-
Friday	10:51 AM	11:18 PM	-
Saturday	11:26 AM	-	-
Sunday	-	12:05 AM	12:04 PM
Monday	-	12:54 AM	12:44 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 18, 2020							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA156	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	UA112	4:45pm	5:26pm	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY816	4:35pm	7:30pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	SKY811	10:15am	3:00pm	Daily
SKY816	5:05pm	8:00pm	6				
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily	OZ623	6:45am	12:10pm	5
OZ626	2:10am	6:05am	1	OZ623	7:00am	12:20pm	7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7	OZ6233	7:30am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	3:35am	7:20am	4	OZ623	8:10am	1:40pm	1, 3
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ6243	3:20pm	7:10pm	2, 4, 6	TW309	11:10am	4:25pm	Daily
OZ624	3:50pm	7:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
TW310	5:25pm	10:15pm	Daily	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
				OZ625	9:05pm	2:25am+1	3
				7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)				HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN			
JD396	7:30am	12:05pm	1	JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4	JD395	8:50pm	5:00am+1	7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)				GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8646	4:30am	7:50am	2, 6	3U864	8:10pm	3:10am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)				BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU764	1:30am	6:00am	3, 5, 7	MU763	4:50pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN	UA189/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	OZ702/625	12:05pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
UA156/183	6:20pm	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	UA192/174	10:40pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA156/193	6:20pm	11:50pm	2 via GUM-ROR	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	12:10pm+1	5 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	12:20pm+1	7 via ICN
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:35am	12:10pm	5 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:35am	12:20pm	7 via ICN
OZ626/721	3:35am	11:50am	4 via ICN	OZ746/6233	12:35am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
UO43	5:40am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ746/623	12:35am	1:40pm	1, 3 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:20pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:50pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:50pm	12:15am+1	7 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
				UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
				UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							
STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
				1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily				
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily				
ROTA TO GUAM				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily	2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
				2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily	2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
				2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily	2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
				2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
				2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily



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Business

Guam's economy for 2019 is expected to post growth of 0% to 1% when the real gross domestic product is officially released by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis this fall. This prediction is part of the University of Guam Regional Center for Public Policy's 2019 Economic Report completed Dec. 30. The report also predicts a stable 0% to -0.2% growth in 2020.

"That, to me, is positive news," said Maria Claret Mapálad-Ruane, the principal author of the report, who holds a doctorate in economics and is a professor of economics at the university. "To maintain 0% is great—and it could even be a positive 1% growth—especially since throughout the year, many developments happen that could negatively impact our economy."

The report takes into consideration economic factors of the past year, to include employment rates, inflation, GDP, the performance of the key economic drivers of tourism and federal spending, and changes in local and national government policies.

Slight growth in 2019

Comparing the 0% to 1% growth prediction to the potential -1% predicted by the

center last year, Ruane said the notably strong performance of Guam's tourism was unexpected, with record-breaking arrivals in 2019, including a 25% increase from Japan, and, most importantly, an increase in on-island spending by Japanese visitors and an even larger increase in spending by Korean visitors.

The other contributor to Guam's economy in 2019 was federal government spending, which increased by more than \$200 million in fiscal 2019 compared to fiscal 2018, including the \$93 million increase in National Defense Authorization Act funding during the same period.

Slight decline forecasted for 2020

The forecast for 2020 of 0% to -0.2% growth is based on the following assumptions:

- a modest increase in consumer spending, driven largely by employment opportunities from the 2020 Guam Census and the opening of the Tsubaki Tower;

- a continued decrease in business spending since 2015, as has been shown in the official Guam GDP estimates by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis. This is primarily due to the uncertainty of bringing



Guam economy saw 0%-1% growth in 2019—UOG report

in H-2B employees for civilian projects. Some of this could also be due to the continuation of the higher business privilege tax as well as the higher minimum wage;

- possibly a modest increase in government of Guam spending based on the prediction of increased revenues for fiscal 2020;
- a significant decrease of \$138 million in NDAA funding compared to fiscal 2019; and
- continued growth in tourism arrivals and on-island spending similar to 2019.

"Even if the strong performance in tourism from 2019 is experienced again in 2020, the cutback of \$138 million in the NDAA budget will, at best, bring the Guam economy back to 0% or even possibly -0.2% growth in the year 2020," Ruane said.

Any additional loss of federal funding and/or visitor spending could worsen this growth forecast, the re-

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM
Contributors to the 2019 Guam Economic Report released by the University of Guam Regional Center for Public Policy: From left, Luisa V. Tenorio; Prairie Rose Garrido; Sofia Diane Meneses, all research fellows; Maria Claret Mapálad-Ruane, lead author and professor of economics; Annette T. Santos, dean of the School of Business and Public Administration; John J. Rivera, director of the Regional Center for Public Policy; Daniel Cayan; and Jun-Patrick Salalila, both research fellows.

port states.

Annette T. Santos, dean of the School of Business and Public Administration, which oversees the Regional Center for Public Policy, said, "This second annual Guam Economic Report is an example of our commitment to empower local and regional stakeholders to achieve greater levels of success through research and scholarly output. We hope that this product will serve as an important resource in key leadership decisions that may affect our island and its future."

Other contributors to the report were research fellows Efigenia Rose Barcinas, Daniel Cayan, Prairie Rose Garrido, Sofia Diane Meneses, Jun-Patrick Salalila, Kristina C. Sayama, Luisa V. Tenorio, and Angelina T. Tretnoff.

The report may be viewed in full at <https://url.uog.edu/SKPyXm>. (PR)

Baba Corp. awards scholarships to UOG students

Baba Corp. has awarded two \$750 scholarships to University of Guam students Ai Motomura and Jeanie Nguyen.

Motomura is a master's student studying clinical psychology, and Nguyen is a senior pursuing her bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Nguyen is also part of the UOG Army ROTC program and was commissioned in December as a finance officer.

The Akira Baba Memorial Scholarship was created by the Baba family in honor of the late businessman Akira "Mike" Baba, who established several hospitality-related businesses under Baba Corp., including Atlantis Submarines, Coco Palm Garden Beach, and Nippon Rent-A-Car. The company also operates Burger King and Nanyo Realty. Applicants for the award must have a minimum grade-point average of 3.0.

The UOG Endowment Foundation, which adminis-



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM
Standing, from left, Katrina Perez, executive director, UOG Endowment Foundation; Ai Motomura; Jeanie Nguyen, both scholarship recipients; and Francis Baba, chief operations officer, Baba Corp. Seated, from left, Hideharu "Bo" Baba, president, Baba Corp.; Yoshie Baba, chairwoman, Baba Corp.; Wilfred Leon Guerrero, chairman, UOG Endowment Foundation; and Yuka Baba, vice president, Baba Corp.

ters scholarship funds donated to the university, encourages members of the public to support the education of local students by establishing

scholarships that align with an industry of particular interest or in memory of those who have passed. Individuals and companies may also make tax-

deductible donations to any existing scholarship fund or to a particular school or college within the university at give.uog.edu. (UOG)

SHRM general membership meeting set

The Society for Human Resource Management-NMI Chapter invites its members, associated HR and management staff, and interested members of the public to attend its general membership meeting on **Friday, Feb. 7, 2020**, at Pacific Island's Club, Charley's cabaret beginning at 9am. The webinar

will consist of two sessions: a three-hour training regarding "Respect in the Workplace" and a four-hour presentation about "Leading for Respect." It will be conducted by Fran Sepler, president of Sepler & Associates, who is best known for her pioneering work in harassment prevention and workplace investigations.

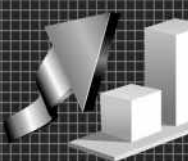
This meeting is open to the public and will provide valuable information for employers, managers, and HR professionals and staff.

» **Induction of SHRM NMI board members**
» **Webinar: Respect in the Workplace**

The presentation includes a lunch buffet at the cost of \$50 for SHRM members and \$60 for non-members. Seats are limited, so reserve your seat by contacting Roman Tudela by e-mail at roman.tudela@gmail.com or Denise Montenegro at denise.montenegro@hyatt.com or by telephone at 670-323-5867/68.

SHRM is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. The NMI Chapter is affiliated with the national organization. (PR)

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Russian Ruble	62.1223
Singapore Dollar	1.3580
South Korean Won	1154.76
Swiss Franc	0.9734
Taiwan Dollar	29.5478
Thailand Baht	30.8925

Nation

Trump peace plan delights Israelis, enrages Palestinians

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump unveiled his long-awaited Mideast peace plan Tuesday alongside a beaming Benjamin Netanyahu, presenting a vision that matched the Israeli leader's hard-line, nationalist views while falling far short of Palestinian ambitions.

Trump's plan envisions a disjointed Palestinian state that turns over key parts of the West Bank to Israel. It sides with Israel on key contentious issues that have bedeviled past peace efforts, including borders and the status of Jerusalem and Jewish settlements, and attaches nearly impossible conditions for granting the Palestinians their hoped-for state.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas dismissed the plan as "nonsense" and vowed to resist it. Netanyahu called it a "historic breakthrough" equal in significance to the country's declaration of inde-

pendence in 1948.

"It's a great plan for Israel. It's a great plan for peace," he said.

He vowed to immediately press forward with his plans to annex the strategic Jordan Valley and all the Israeli settle-

ments in occupied lands. Netanyahu said he'd ask his Cabinet to approve the annexation plans in their next meeting on Sunday, an explosive move that could trigger harsh international reaction and renewed violence with the Palestinians.

"This dictates once and for all the eastern border of Israel," Netanyahu told Israeli reporters later. "Israel is getting an immediate American recognition of Israeli sovereignty on all the settlements, without exceptions."

Given the Palestinian opposition, the plan seems unlikely to lead to any significant breakthrough. But it could give a powerful boost to both Trump and Netanyahu who are both facing legal problems ahead of tough elections.

Trump called his plan a "win-win" for both Israel and the Palestinians, and urged the Palestinians not to miss their opportunity for independence. But Abbas, who accuses the U.S. of unfair bias toward Israel, rejected it out of hand.

"We say 1,000 no's to the Deal of the Century," Abbas

said, using a nickname for Trump's proposal.

"We will not kneel and we will not surrender," he said, adding that the Palestinians would resist the plan through "peaceful, popular means."

The plan comes amid Trump's impeachment trial and on a U.S. election year, and after Netanyahu was indicted on counts of fraud, breach of trust and bribery in three separate cases. The longtime Israeli leader, who denies any wrongdoing, also faces a March 2 parliamentary election, Israel's third in less than a year. He hopes to use the plan, and his close ties with Trump, to divert attention from his legal troubles.

The Palestinians seek all of the West Bank and east Jerusalem—areas captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war—for an independent state and the removal of many of the more than 700,000 Israeli settlers from these areas.



President Donald Trump speaks during an event with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020, to announce the Trump administration's much-anticipated plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

AP

KEY POINTS

JERUSALEM (AP)—The Mideast peace plan announced by President Donald Trump on Tuesday supports the Israeli position on

nearly all of the most contentious issues in the decades-old conflict.

Where previous presidents tried to cajole Israel and the Palestin-

ians into compromising on thorny issues like the borders of a future Palestinian state, the status of Jerusalem and the fate of refugees,

Trump's Mideast team largely adopted the Israeli position.

As a result, the Palestinians have angrily rejected the plan, and the

international community appears unlikely to rally around it.

Here is a look at the key points of the 50-page proposal:

BORDERS

The peace plan says Israel will have to make "significant territorial compromises" and that a Palestinian state should have territory "reasonably comparable in size to the territory of the West Bank and Gaza pre-1967," when Israel seized those territories, along with east Jerusalem, in a regionwide war. The plan provides for mutually agreed land swaps. But a "conceptual map" released with the plan shows a disjointed Palestinian state, with Israeli and Palestinian enclaves linked to their respective states by what the plan calls "pragmatic transportation solutions," including bridges, tunnels and roads. The Jordan Valley, which accounts for around a fourth of the West Bank, "will be under Israeli sovereignty."

JERUSALEM

The peace plan would leave most of annexed east Jerusalem, including its Old City and holy sites, under Israeli control while allowing the Palestinians to establish a capital on the outskirts of the city outside Israel's separation barrier. It said Jerusalem's holy sites, sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims, should be open to worshipers. The understandings governing the flashpoint holy site known as the Al-Aqsa mosque compound to Muslims and the Temple Mount to Jews would remain in place.

SETTLEMENTS

The plan allows Israel to immediately annex virtually all its settlements in the occupied West Bank, which are viewed as illegal by the Palestinians and most of the international community. It would freeze settlement construction in areas earmarked for the future Palestinian state during the period of negotiations, but those areas are already largely off-limits to settlement activity. "Not a single settlement will be evacuated," Netanyahu told reporters. "Itamar is equal to Tel Aviv," he said, referring to a Jewish settlement in the heart of the West Bank.

SECURITY

Under the plan, Israel "will maintain overriding security responsibility" for the state of Palestine, which will be "fully demilitarized." The Palestinians will have their own internal security forces but Israel will control the borders and monitor all crossings. A "Crossings Board" made up of three Palestinians, three Israelis and a U.S. representative will oversee the crossings and resolve disputes. Israel will only implement its obligations under the plan if the Gaza Strip, which is currently ruled by the Islamic Hamas movement, is transferred back to the full control of the Palestinian Authority or another entity acceptable to Israel. Hamas and all other militant groups in Gaza must disarm and the territory must be fully demilitarized.

REFUGEES

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled or were forced out of what is now Israel during the 1948 war around its creation. Those refugees and their descendants now number around 5 million and are scattered across the region. The Palestinians believe they have the "right of return" to former properties, something Israel has always rejected, saying it would destroy Israel's Jewish character. The peace plan says "there shall be no right of return by, or absorption of, any Palestinian refugee into the state of Israel." It says refugees can live in the state of Palestine, become citizens of the countries where they live or be absorbed by other countries. It says the U.S. will try to provide "some compensation" to refugees.

Whether to call Bolton, other witnesses roils Trump's trial

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump's impeachment trial is shifting to questions from senators, a pivotal juncture as Republicans lack the votes to block witnesses and face a potential setback in their hope of ending the trial with a quick acquittal.

After Trump's defense team rested Tuesday with a plea to "end now," Senate Majority Leader Mitch Mc-

Connell privately told senators he doesn't yet have the votes to brush back Democratic demands for witnesses now that revelations from John Bolton, the former national security adviser, have roiled the trial.

Bolton writes in a forthcoming book that Trump told him he wanted to withhold military aid from Ukraine until it helped with investigations into Democratic rival

Joe Biden. That assertion, if true, would undercut a key defense argument and go to the heart of one of the two articles of impeachment against the president.

"I think Bolton probably has something to offer us," said Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska.

Not in Trump's view. "Why didn't John Bolton complain about this 'nonsense' a long time ago, when he was very

publicly terminated," Trump tweeted shortly after midnight. "He said, not that it matters, NOTHING!"

The uncertainty about witnesses arises days before

crucial votes on the issue. In a Senate split 53-47 in favor of Republicans, at least four GOP senators must join all Democrats to reach the 51 votes required to call wit-

nesses, decide whom to call or do nearly anything else in the trial. Several Republicans apparently are ready to join Democrats in calling witnesses.

3 women found dead in South Florida; baby missing

MIAMI (AP)—Police are searching for a missing baby after three women were found dead Tuesday in a South Florida home, authorities said.

Investigators believe the newborn infant is with its

father, though they weren't immediately calling the man a suspect in the slayings, Miami-Dade police spokesman Chris Thomas said. Police were searching the southwestern Miami-Dade County

neighborhood for the man and baby.

Officials didn't immediately release the names of the victims. They also didn't say how the women were killed or how they were related to the child.

Asia

Deaths rise to 132 in China outbreak as foreigners leave

BEIJING (AP)—Countries began evacuating their citizens Wednesday from the Chinese city hardest-hit by an outbreak of a new virus that has killed 132 people and infected more than 6,000 on the mainland and abroad.

A Japanese flight carrying evacuees home included four people with coughs and fevers. The three men and one woman were taken to a Tokyo hospital on separate ambulances for treatment and further medical checks.

It wasn't immediately known whether they were infected with the new type of coronavirus that appeared in the central city of Wuhan in December. Its symptoms, including cough and fever and in severe cases pneumonia, are similar to many other illnesses.

China's latest figures cover the previous 24 hours and add 26 to the number of deaths, 25 of which were in the central province of Hubei and its capital, Wuhan. The 5,974 cases on the mainland marked a rise of 1,459 from the previous day, although that rise is a smaller increase than the 1,771 new cases reported on Monday. Dozens of infections have been confirmed abroad as well.

The United Arab Emirates, home to long-haul carriers Emirates and Etihad, confirmed its first case on Wednesday in a person who had come from Wuhan, the state-run news agency reported.

Chartered planes carrying evacuees home to Japan and the United States left Wuhan early Wednesday as other countries planned similar evacuations from areas China has shut down to try to contain the virus. The lockdown of 17 cities has trapped more than 50 million people in the most far-reaching disease control measures ever imposed.

A plane carrying Americans who had been in Wuhan left for Anchorage, Alaska, where they will be rescreened for the virus. U.S. hospitals are prepared to treat or quarantine people who may be infected. After departing Alaska, the plane is to fly to Ontario, California.

At the Tokyo airport, Takeo Aoyama, an employee at Nippon Steel Corp.'s subsidiary in Wuhan, told reporters he was relieved to be able to return home.

"We were feeling increasingly uneasy as the situation developed so rapidly and we were still in the city," Aoyama said, his voice muffled by a white surgical mask.

Tokyo Metropolitan Government confirmed the condi-



A government worker sprays disinfectant on a residential building in Wuhan in central China's Hubei Province, Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020. AP

tion of the four ill passengers after the flight of 206 Japanese evacuees arrived. They were taken in separate ambulances to a Tokyo hospital for treatment and further health checks.

All of the passengers had their temperatures checked before boarding and on the

plane, and plans had been made for all of the evacuees to be treated and quarantined depending on their test results.

Among those remaining in Wuhan was Sara Platto, an Italian animal behavior researcher and veterinarian, and her son, Matteo.

"My son turned 12 on

January 23, the first day of the lockdown in Wuhan. So he couldn't invite his friends over. We had a remote birthday celebration, with people 'visiting' him over Wechat," Platto said, referring to China's Twitter-like messaging app. "We called it the epidemic birthday."

Platto said there were 25 Italians stuck in Wuhan, some students, some very young, who stay in touch online for material and emotional support. She has used her scientific background to offer advice and debunk sensational false news, reminding friends to wash their hands

AP source: Jet evacuates Americans from China outbreak zone

SANTA ANA, Calif. (AP)—An airplane evacuating as many as 240 Americans from a Chinese city at the center of a virus outbreak departed Wednesday before dawn, and is en route to the U.S., a U.S. State Department official has told The Associated Press.

The U.S. government chartered the plane to fly out diplomats from the U.S. Consulate in Wuhan, where the latest coronavirus outbreak started, and other U.S. citizens. The plane will make a refueling stop in Alaska before flying on to Southern California, the U.S. Embassy in China has said.

Tuesday night, it was announced that the plane would land at March Air Reserve Base in California's Riverside County instead of at Ontario International Airport in neighboring San Bernardino County.

Curt Hagman, an Ontario airport commissioner, said the Centers for Disease

Control announced the diversion.

"We were prepared but the State Department decided to switch the flight" to the airbase, Hagman said.

Wuhan is the epicenter of a new virus that has sickened thousands and killed more than 100 and the official said Tuesday that the plane left the city before dawn Wednesday, China time. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the official was not authorized to speak publicly.

When the plane arrives in Anchorage, Alaska, passengers will clear customs and go through the Centers for Disease Control screening.

China has cut off access to Wuhan and 16 other cities in Hubei province to prevent people from leaving and spreading the virus further. In addition to the United States, countries including Japan and South Korea have also planned evacuations.

4 Japanese evacuees from Wuhan taken to hospital with fevers

BEIJING (AP)—Japanese officials say four evacuees on a flight from the Chinese city of Wuhan have a cough and fever.

Tokyo Metropolitan Government confirmed their condition after the flight of 206 evacuees arrived Wednesday morning to a Tokyo airport. Passengers on the flight were wearing masks and underwent temperature checks before boarding and on the plane. Plans were made for all of the evacuees to be treated and quarantined depending on their test results.

The four are a woman in her 50s and three men whose ages are from their 30s to 50s. They were taken to a Tokyo hospital on separate ambulances for treatment and further medical checks.

The new type of coronavirus that has infected thousands of people, mainly in China, causes cold- and flu-like symptoms, including cough and fever, and in more severe cases, shortness of breath and pneumonia.

New virus infects more than 6,000 in China, other countries

A viral outbreak that began in China has infected more than 6,000 people in the mainland and more than a dozen other countries.

Some details on cases confirmed as of Wednesday morning in Beijing:

■ China: 5,974 cases on the mainland. In addition, Hong Kong has eight cases and Macao has five. Nearly all of the 132 deaths have been in central Hubei province, where the illnesses began in December.

■ Thailand: 14
■ Taiwan: 8
■ Singapore: 7
■ Malaysia: 7
■ Japan: 6
■ Australia: 5
■ United States: 5, 2 in southern California and 1 each in Washington state, Chicago, and Arizona.

■ South Korea: 4
■ France: 4
■ Germany: 4
■ Canada: 3
■ Vietnam: 2
■ Nepal: 1
■ Cambodia: 1
■ Sri Lanka: 1 (AP)

and faces often.

As much as panic, people spending most of their times indoors have to deal with boredom.

Matteo usually has a very busy agenda between his school, sports, and volunteer work, but now "it's like suddenly everything has slowed down," Platto said. As with other international schools, classes are moving online until the all-clear is sounded.

"We have most of what we need for now. I think it's a serious situation, but we are not in zombie land," she said.

Several countries have confirmed cases of the virus, with most of them being Chinese visitors, people who visited Wuhan or family members in close contact to the sick. Japan's six confirmed cases include a tour bus driver who drove visiting groups from Wuhan. Germany says four workers at an auto parts company possibly were infected when a colleague from Shanghai visited.

Australia and New Zealand were the latest countries planning evacuations. Both countries also stepped up their travel advice to China, as did Britain. Experts have feared travel during the Lunar New Year holiday would enable the further spread of the virus, and China expanded the holiday to keep people home, closing schools and offices to try to contain it.

Hong Kong's leader said the territory will cut all rail links to the mainland and halve the number of flights. Mongolia and North Korea were closing their borders with China, and many places have curtailed flights or are screening travelers arriving from China.

Wuhan is building two hospitals in a matter of days to add 2,500 beds for treatment of patients with the virus.

The new virus is from the coronavirus family, which includes those that can cause the common cold as well as more serious illnesses such as SARS and MERS.

The source of the virus and the full extent of its spread are still unknown. However, the World Health Organization said most cases reported to date "have been milder, with around 20% of those infected experiencing severe illness."

On Tuesday, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus met with Chinese leader Xi Jinping to discuss the latest information on the outbreak and reiterate their commitment to bringing it under control.

World

Mag 7.7 quake hits between Cuba and Jamaica, but no injuries

HAVANA (AP)—A powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck in the Caribbean Sea between Jamaica and eastern Cuba on Tuesday, shaking a vast area from Mexico to Florida and beyond, but there were no reports of casualties or heavy damage.

The quake was centered 139 kilometers (86 miles) northwest of Montego Bay, Jamaica, and 140 kilometers (87 miles) west-southwest of Niquero, Cuba, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. It hit at 2:10 p.m. (1910 GMT) and the epicenter was a relatively shallow 10 kilometers (6 miles) beneath the surface.

Dr. Enrique Arango Arias, head of Cuba's National Seismological Service, told state media that there had been no serious damage or injuries reported on the island.

are common, but fatalities and major damage are rare.

Tuesday's quake came about two hours after a magnitude 4.8 temblor shook parts of neighboring Turkey near the western town of Kirkagac. That is more than 300 miles (480 kilometers) north of the Karpathos quake's epicenter.

No injuries or damage were reported from the Turkish quake, and it was unclear whether the two were connected.

On Friday, a magnitude 6.8 earthquake hit eastern Turkey, killing 41 people and injuring 1,600 as it damaged hundreds of buildings. Greek authorities said the fault that caused that killer earthquake does not affect Greece.

■ ■ ■

The Cayman Islands were rocked by several of the strong aftershocks that followed in the area, including one measured at magnitude 6.1. Water was cut off to much of Grand Cayman Island, and public schools were canceled for Wednesday.

Gov. Carlos Joaquín González of Mexico's Quintana Roo state, which is home to Cancun, Tulum and other popular beach resorts, said the earthquake was felt in multiple parts of the low-lying Caribbean state but there were no reports of damage or injuries.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center initially warned that the quake could gener-



A sinkhole is surrounded by police tape after it appeared when a powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck in the Caribbean Sea between Jamaica and eastern Cuba, at Public Beach on West Bay, Grand Cayman, Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020. AP

■ ■ ■
ATHENS, Greece (AP) — An undersea earthquake with preliminary magnitude 5.2 occurred Tuesday off the Aegean Sea island of Karpathos, Greek authorities said. There were no immediate reports of injuries or damage.

The University of Athens' Geodynamic Institute said the quake struck at 5:38 p.m. (1538 GMT) some 98 kilometers (60 miles) southeast of Karpathos, in an area close to the Greek resort islands of Rhodes and Crete.

Greece lies in one of the world's most seismically active areas and earthquakes

ate waves 1 to 3 feet above normal in Cuba, Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, Honduras, Mexico and Belize, but issued a later message saying the danger had passed.

The quake was felt strongly in Santiago, the largest city in eastern Cuba, said Belkis Guerrero, who works in a Roman Catholic cultural center in the center of Santiago.

"We were all sitting and we

felt the chairs move," she said. "We heard the noise of everything moving around."

She said there was no apparent damage in the heart of the colonial city.

"It felt very strong but it doesn't look like anything happened," she told The Associated Press.

It was also felt a little farther east at the U.S. Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba,

on the southeastern coast of the island. There were no immediate reports of injuries or damages, said J. Overton, a spokesman for the installation, which has a total population of about 6,000 people.

Several South Florida buildings were evacuated as a precaution, according to city of Miami and Miami-Dade County officials. No injuries or road closures were report-

ed. No shaking was felt at the Hard Rock stadium in Miami Gardens, which will host the Super Bowl on Sunday.

In the Cayman Islands, the quake left cracked roads and what appeared to be sewage spilling from cracked mains. There were no reports of injuries or more severe damage, said Kevin Morales, editor-in-chief of the Cayman Compass newspaper.

UAE confirms first cases of Chinese virus in Mideast

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—The United Arab Emirates on Wednesday confirmed the first cases in the Mideast of the new Chinese virus that causes flu-like symptoms, saying doctors now were treating a family that had just come from a city at the epicenter of the outbreak.

The UAE's state-run WAM news agency made the announcement citing the Health and Prevention Ministry, but offered no details on where the stricken family lived nor where they were receiving treatment.

It also did not offer a number of those afflicted by the virus, other than to say the cases came from "members of a family arriving from the Chinese city of Wuhan."

The UAE is home to long-haul carriers Emirates and Etihad Airways and is a hub for global air travel.

Officials are taking "all the necessary precautions in ac-

cordance with the scientific recommendations, conditions and standards approved by the World Health Organization," the ministry said. "The general health condition is not a cause for concern."

The new type of coronavirus first appeared in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in December. Its symptoms, including cough and fever and in severe cases pneumonia, are similar to many other illnesses.

The new virus causes flu-like symptoms, such as fever, cough and in severe cases pneumonia. It's from the coronavirus family, which includes those that can cause the common cold as well as more serious illnesses such as SARS and MERS.

The viral outbreak that began in China has infected more than 6,000 people in the mainland and more than a dozen other countries. China's death toll has passed 100.

Foreigners in virus-hit Wuhan wonder what's next

BEIJING (AP)—As the U.S. evacuates some Americans out of the Chinese city hardest-hit by a viral outbreak, many like Doug Perez are opting to stay.

It's not that he's unconcerned. Perez and his girlfriend have hunkered down in their apartment for days. They've argued. They've fretted over missed food deliveries. They've dubbed their Labrador, Chubby, "Apocalypse Dog," venturing out for short walks on deserted streets only after fitting him with a mask.

But Perez won't leave because his girlfriend, who is Chinese, wouldn't be allowed on the plane.

"A lot of foreigners are stuck here," the 28-year-old San Francisco native said. "There is no way on Earth many of us, including myself, are going to leave our loved ones."

As China rolls out containment measures unprecedented in modern history, locking down

more than 50 million people in 17 cities, foreigners are trapped in the quarantine zone as well.

A charter flight evacuating as many as 240 Americans, including diplomats and their families, left Wuhan early Wednesday en route to Alaska for refueling then California. The State Department official who confirmed the flight's departure spoke on condition of anonymity because the official was not authorized to speak publicly.

But Americans in Wuhan estimate there are more than a thousand U.S. citizens in the city, meaning most will be left behind.

"It's like a sinking ship," Perez said.

The day the lockdown was announced, Perez and his girlfriend got in a fight—"a plate was destroyed"—over whether to venture to a supermarket to buy food. His girlfriend, who doesn't want to be named, won the argument,

and the couple began ordering food online. The streets went quiet. They stay in every night, spending hours a day on social media checking up on the latest news and fielding calls from worried relatives.

On Monday evening, guards barred him from leaving his apartment compound, leaving him wondering what's next.

"That's kind of dawned on me, like how bad this could get," Perez said. "Who knows what will be next week. Will it be police, will it be soldiers? Will we physically not be able to leave our building?"

Japan, South Korea, France and other wealthy governments are also planning evacuations. But for many from other countries, there are no plans for evacuations at all, leaving them totally stranded.

Another American, who declined to be identified out of fear of online and government harassment, said she

was choosing to stay behind because she has a cough and was told she would likely be quarantined at the Wuhan airport by Chinese authorities.

But for Priscilla Dickey, 35, from South Burlington, Vermont, trying to get on the plane was a no-brainer because of her 8-year-old daughter, Hermione, who she worries could be vulnerable to the virus. On Monday afternoon, the consulate phoned Dickey and told her she and her daughter had seats.

After packing a bag with three shirts and a pair of pants, Dickey stayed up until two in the morning trying to figure out how she would get to the airport amid a transportation shutdown. She "stress cleaned" her apartment in the morning, she said, before getting in an airport-bound car, waves of emotion washing over her.

"I was feeling guilt," Dickey said, speaking by phone on her way to the airport. "Excitement, guilt, stress—all of it."

Environment

Amorous giant tortoise is saving his species from extinction

By DIANE BELL
THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

SAN DIEGO—A giant tortoise from the San Diego Zoo has created his own Galapagos Islands following—literally.

The love life of Diego, a playboy tortoise, has gained him a place in the national spotlight.

On Sunday, CNN publicized the story of a “womanizing tortoise whose rampant sex life may have single-handedly saved his entire species from extinction.”

This offbeat news even di-

verted the attention of U.S. Rep. Scott Peters, a San Diego Democrat, from the issues of Iran and impeachment long enough for Peters to tweet his congratulations Sunday: “Thanks to this San Diegan, doing good for the world in his own way.”

Diego came to the San Diego Zoo as a young adult in the early 1930s when several land tortoises from the Galapagos Islands were shipped to U.S. zoos, said Rick Schwartz, San Diego Zoo Global ambassador and spokesman.

In the mid-1970s, though,

a plea came from Galapagos wildlife officials spearheading a breeding program to save the area’s dwindling population of the gentle giants that weigh between 450 and 500 pounds as adults.

They were specifically searching for a subspecies of tortoise from the Galapagos island of Espanola, where the giant creatures were on the brink of extinction. Only two males and 12 females remained.

DNA testing confirmed that Diego was from that island, so the San Diego Zoo returned

him in 1977. Ever since, Diego has been hard at work at a Galapagos National Parks service breeding center on Santa Cruz Island.

Little did anyone suspect that Diego would turn into a love machine drawn to the females who seemed to find him especially attractive.

Since the program started, he and the two remaining Espanola males and their offspring have boosted their subspecies population to more than 2,000. Diego, the Genghis Khan of tortoises, was determined to be responsible

for fathering 800 to 1,000 of them, or at least 40%.

“He’s a real Casanova,” said Schwartz, who last visited Diego at the Galapagos breeding center about 10 years ago. He has no idea what attracted the female tortoises to Diego or made him more prolific than the other guys, but perhaps it was his charming personality. The caretakers told Schwartz that Diego was a very personable tortoise. “The caretakers all adored him,”

Schwartz said.

One of the primary characteristics differentiating the Espanola Island subspecies from others is that, instead of the more common dome-shaped shell, they have a saddleback-shaped shell that rises to a peak behind the head. Espanola has a drier habitat and, instead of eating grass and low-lying plants, its tortoise population must feed from trees. The raised shell allows more flexible neck movement.

2019 was second-warmest year on record, NASA and NOAA say

By AMINA KHAN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

In a time of climate anxiety, 2019 was the second-warmest year since scientists began taking temperatures in 1880, government scientists announced Wednesday.

The near-record temperatures cemented the past decade’s title as the warmest in modern human history, according to data from NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The steady increase in land and ocean temperatures around the world has been fueled almost entirely by greenhouse gas emissions since the onset of the Industrial Revolution.

“The decade that just ended is clearly the warmest decade on record,” said Gavin Schmidt, director of NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York. “Every decade since the 1960s clearly has been warmer than the one before.”

In 2019, the average global surface temperature was 1.7 degrees above the 20th-century average of 57 degrees Fahrenheit, according to NOAA’s measurements.

NASA pegged 2019’s glob-

al temperature at 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit above the average from 1951-80.

Each agency performs its own analysis using temperature readings from thousands of land-based weather stations around the world as well as from buoys floating throughout the oceans. Minor differences in their methods produce slight variations in the numbers, but the results are in lockstep when it comes to the pace and direction of global warming.

All of the last five years were exceptionally warm, with only small differences that were driven by natural variations in weather patterns, scientists said.

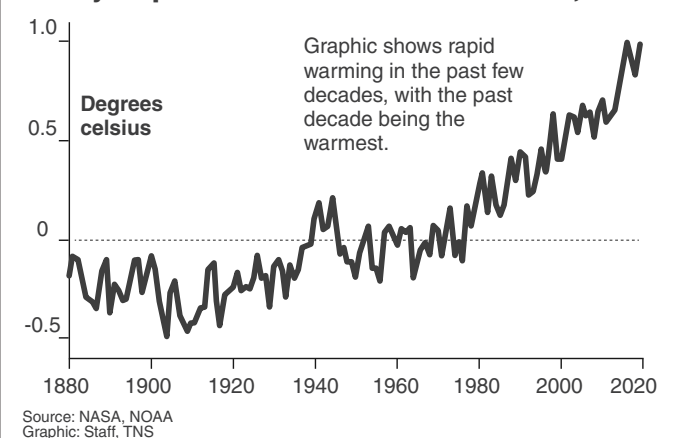
“We’ve seen very clearly over the long term (with) many decades of temperature observations from around the world that the global temperature is going up,” said Noah Diffenbaugh, a climate scientist at Stanford University who was not involved in the analyses.

What’s more, he added, “the signal of that warming is very strong compared to the year-to-year and decade-to-decade fluctuations that occur as a result of the variability in the ocean and atmosphere.”

2019 second warmest on record

According to analyses by NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Earth’s global surface temperatures in 2019 were the second warmest since modern recordkeeping began in 1880.

Yearly temperature anomalies from 1880 to 2019,



Diego, the former San Diego tortoise, strikes a pose at the San Diego Zoo, where he was on exhibit for about 40 years. He left in 1977 to take part in a Galapagos Islands breeding program through which he is credited with playing a large role in saving his dwindling subspecies from extinction.

SAN DIEGO ZOO GLOBAL

Research: Crab larvae suffering shell damage from ocean acidification

By HAL BERNTON
THE SEATTLE TIMES

SEATTLE—Ocean acidification is damaging the shells of young Dungeness crab in the Northwest, an impact that scientists did not expect until much later this century, according to new research.

A study released this week in the journal *Science of the Total Environment* is based on a 2016 survey of Oregon, Washington and British Columbia coastal waters that examined larval Dungeness. The findings add to the concerns about the future of the Dungeness as atmospheric carbon dioxide—on the rise due to fossil-fuel combustion—is absorbed by the Pacific Ocean and increases acidification.

“If the crabs are affected already, we really need to make sure we start to pay attention

to various components of the food chain before it is too late,” said Nina Bednarsek, the lead author among 13 contributing scientists. The study was funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA).

Dungeness sustain West Coast commercial seafood harvests typically worth more than \$200 million annually, and are a mainstay for tribal and recreational crabbers. They have thrived in coastal waters that in recent years have been found to have hot spots of ocean acidification. This is due to periodic strong upwellings of deeper ocean water rich in carbon dioxide and surface waters that also have absorbed gas released by fossil-fuel combustion and other human activity.

“This makes our region very unique,” said Richard

Feely, a senior scientist at NOAA’s Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, who was one of the co-authors of the new study.

Research published in 2014 showed ocean-acidification harm to West Coast pteropods, small free-swimming snails that are food for Dungeness crab. And a laboratory study of Dungeness crab larvae released in May 2016 by the NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center showed that increased ocean acidification could also jeopardize the crab.

Bednarsek, Feely and their colleagues—for the first time—documented that some Dungeness larvae in the wild already had pitted and folded shells, described in their journal article as “severe carapace dissolution,” and that these larvae were

typically smaller in size.

“We were really surprised to see this level of dissolution happening,” Bednarsek said.

They also found damage to hairlike structures that act as sensory receptors, and the researchers hypothesize this could lead to slower movements, impaired swimming and other problems.

A 2017 study, based on expected declines in some Dungeness food as ocean-acidity levels change, forecast these West Coast crab stocks could be about 30% lower by 2063, although they would fluctuate from year to year.

The authors of this new study say more research is needed to understand what the new findings may mean for the future of the Dungeness crab as the Pacific coastal waters continue to absorb more carbon dioxide.

Life & Style

'Palm Springs' sets a Sundance record in \$17.5M sale

WaPo clears writer who tweeted about Bryant rape allegation

NEW YORK (AP)—A Washington Post reporter who had been placed on administrative leave after she tweeted a link to a story about a 2003 rape allegation against Kobe Bryant has been cleared to return to work, the paper said Tuesday.

In a statement, the Post said that an internal review had determined that political reporter Felicia Sonmez was "not in clear and di-

rect violation of our social media policy," but that the tweets were "ill-timed."

Sonmez's tweet came in the hours after Bryant, 41, died in a helicopter crash Sunday.

"We consistently urge restraint, which is particularly important when there are tragic deaths. We regret having spoken publicly about a personnel matter," the statement signed by managing

editor Tracy Grant said.

The paper had come under some intense internal criticism for having taken action against Sonmez. Hundreds of Post staffers had signed a letter from the Washington Post Newspaper Guild on Monday expressing "alarm and dismay" over the move and urging executive editor Marty Baron and managing editor Tracy Grant to ensure Sonmez's safety.

PARK CITY, Utah (AP)—

The "Groundhog Day"-esque comedy "Palm Springs," by Andy Samberg and the Lonely Island, has set an acquisition record at the Sundance Film Festival by 69 cents.

The indie distributor Neon and the streaming service Hulu bought "Palm Springs" for exactly \$17,500,000.69 in a sale announced Monday evening at the Park City festival. The previous record Sundance sale was the \$17.5 million Fox Searchlight paid for Nate Parker's "The Birth of a

Nation" in 2016.

In a statement, Samberg and his Lonely Island partners Akiva Schaffer and Jorma Taccone, along with producer Becky Sloviter, joked that the financial terms of the deal were unfavorable.

"We spent over \$85 million of our own money on this movie, WE ARE TAKING A BATH on this deal," they said. "We hope Neon and Hulu are happy but we definitely have a lot of explaining to do to our families."

"Palm Springs," directed

by Max Barbakow, stars Samberg and Cristin Milioti as a pair of wedding guests who are trapped living the same day over again in the Southern California desert town. The film, one of the most obviously commercial at this year's Sundance, drew acclaim after its premiere Sunday for its clever twist on the "Groundhog Day" premise.

Neon will give "Palm Springs" a theatrical release, with Hulu taking the film's streaming rights. No release date was announced.

Miley Cyrus, Liam Hemsworth single again, divorce finalized

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Miley Cyrus and Liam Hemsworth are officially single.

Court records show that a Los Angeles judge on Tuesday finalized the divorce that ended the brief marriage of the 27-year-old American pop star and the 30-year-old Australian actor.

The couple separated and Hemsworth filed for divorce in August, about eight months after he and Cyrus married.

Hemsworth and Cyrus have no children, and neither sought spousal support. Documents cited irreconcilable differences as the reason for the split.

In a statement announcing their separation, they said they were choosing to focus on themselves and their careers and would remain "dedicated parents to all of their animals they share."

The "Wrecking Ball" singer and the "Hunger Games" actor spent sporadic stints as a couple for nearly a decade before they married in De-



(PHOTO BY JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION/AP, FILE)

This April 22, 2019 file photo shows Liam Hemsworth, left, and Miley Cyrus arrive at the premiere of "Avengers: Endgame" in Los Angeles. Cyrus and Hemsworth are legally single. Court records show that a Los Angeles judge on Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020, finalized the divorce that ended the brief marriage. The couple separated and Hemsworth filed for divorce in August, about eight months after he and Cyrus married.

cember 2018.

The day after Hemsworth filed for divorce, Cyrus denied on Twitter that her infidelity was the reason.

"I can admit to a lot of things but I refuse to admit that my

marriage ended because of cheating," Cyrus said in one of a series of tweets. "Liam and I have been together for a decade. I've said it before & it remains true, I love Liam and always will."

Two more accusers set to testify against Harvey Weinstein

NEW YORK (AP)— One says Harvey Weinstein raped her after she let her guard down by telling herself he was only a "dirty old man." The other claims he offered movie roles to her in exchange for joining in a threesome with him.

The one-time aspiring actresses, Tarale Wulff and Dawn Dunning, are expected to describe those experiences from the 2000s with the disgraced movie mogul when they take the witness stand Wednesday at a New York City rape trial seen as a milestone for the #MeToo movement.

Prosecutors are using the two so-called "Molineux" witnesses to bolster their case against Weinstein. The judge has allowed them to testify about "prior bad acts" that didn't result in criminal charges because of the statute of limitations and other legal issues.

Weinstein, 67, is charged with forcing oral sex on then-"Project Runway" production

assistant Mimi Haley in 2006 and raping another aspiring actress in 2013, who could testify later this week. He's insisted any sexual encounters were consensual and zeroed in on his accusers' continued contact with him after the alleged assaults.

The Associated Press does not typically identify people who say they have been victims of sexual assault, unless they agree to be named or gone public with their stories as Haley, Wulff, Dunning and "Sopranos" actress Annabella Sciorra have done.

Wulff met Weinstein in 2005 while working as a cocktail waitress at a members-only lounge at Cipriani's, one of his favorite Manhattan haunts. Even after he cornered her in a hallway and started masterbating, she convinced herself Weinstein "was simply a dirty old man" and decided to take up his offer to read for potential acting roles, prosecutor Meghan Hast said in her opening statement.

After Wulff read, Hast said, a driver took her to Weinstein's apartment. There, the much bigger and heavier Weinstein pushed her onto a bed and raped her, the prosecutor said.

Dunning alleges Weinstein fondled her genitals during a business meeting in his hotel suite in 2004 and on another occasion offered her three small movie roles, but only if she had three-way sex with he and his assistant.

"Dawn tried to laugh it off, make a joke of it, but the defendant got angry," Hast said. "'This is how the industry works,' he screamed at her. 'How do you think other actresses got ahead?'"

Hast said Dunning then fled.

Jurors so far have heard a tearful Haley say how she tried to fight off Weinstein before he sexually assaulted her. Last week, Sciorra testified that Weinstein overpowered and raped her after barging into her apartment in the mid-1990s.

Hostility from sister slows aunt's efforts to help niece

DEAR ABBY: I'm unsure about how to proceed with my niece. She is struggling with child-rearing and debt.

Twenty-five years ago, when she was 16, my sister "Nan" and her husband threw her out on the street. I took her in for two years. Until she graduated from high school, she lived with me and my two daughters. She reconciled with my sister at the time of her graduation. After that I backed off, trying to let Nan perform her role as mom.

I have had a bumpy road with my sister since then, but until a year ago, we were doing OK. Now Nan has declared all-out war on me, and nothing I do or say seems to make any difference. I think her issues are political, but she refuses to discuss them, so I can't be sure.

I have backed off from mothering my niece for many years. But she clearly needs some family support and guidance, which I am able to offer so she can get back on her feet. She's a wonderful woman who is raising two lovely children, but a serious illness is preventing her from providing long-term security for herself or her kids.

I no longer feel obligated to stay at arm's length from her, but am I wrong? Nan will view any support for her daughter as interference in her family, and I don't want to cause problems with their relationship. I no longer care about my relationship with my sister, which seems irreparable, but I don't want to put my niece in an awkward position. She truly needs the help that

I am prepared to give. Any advice on what I should do?

LOVING AUNTIE

DEAR AUNTIE: Your niece is fortunate to have such a caring aunt. You saved her life. Offer the help she needs; it's the right thing to do. If she's afraid it will damage her relationship with her mother, she is free to refuse it.

As to your relationship with your possibly unstable sister, defend yourself as much as possible from her attacks, keep your distance and do not attempt to heal your fractured family because you cannot fix what's wrong with her.

DEAR ABBY: Please do not publish my name or city. I'm a senior male in a six-year, happy relationship with a wonderful, understanding lady. But after decades of exploration and study, I have come to accept that I am nonbinary and/or gender fluid. My sexual expression—and orientation—shifts back and forth over time. This is far more than simply wearing ladies' underwear or craving sex with men.

I live in an extremely conservative, mid-sized city, where there is practically no acceptance of gays or lesbians, and intersex people are unheard of. There are no knowledgeable doctors, counselors or support groups anywhere nearby. It would be so comforting to find someone like myself to share these feelings with. Is it even possible?

UNCOMFORTABLY QUIET IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR QUIET: Have you searched online for the wealth of information on sexuality and gender identity? PFLAG, the excellent organization I have mentioned in my column before, has a chapter in your city, which has for many years provided support and information to LGBTQ individuals and their families. It will also guide you to other resources nearby. Please go to pflag.org and search on your geographical area. Trust me, if you do, you'll be glad you did.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



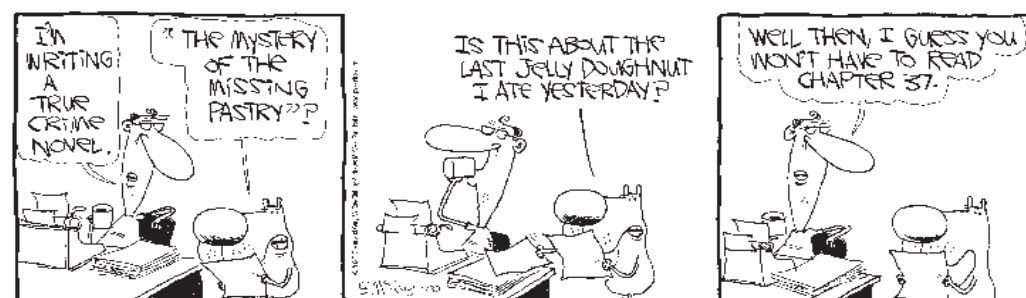
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

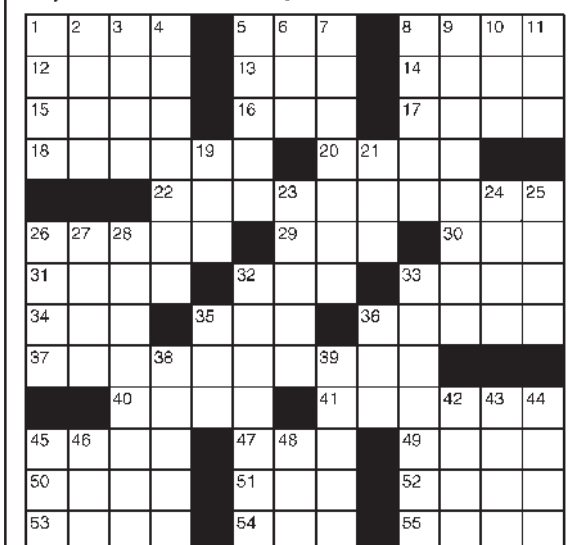
1 Sleeve end
5 Soap unit
8 Con job
12 Milky gem
13 Foot rub response
14 Chorus syllables
15 Author Ferber
16 24 hours
17 Fashion magazine
18 Soldier's ID
20 Nest setting
22 Wed
26 Origami need
29 Ref
30 Conk out
31 Country singer Jackson
32 Rx writers
33 Lion's pride?
34 Dijon denial
35 Corp. boss
36 Does the job

DOWN

1 Not single-sex
2 High hairstyle
3 Sharp tooth
4 Level
5 Police ID
6 Bond rating
7 Beats
8 Stream-lined
9 Its days are numbered
10 100%
11 Fannie —
19 Football filler
21 Gym unit
23 Henry VIII's house
24 Sty cry
25 Casual tops
26 Hunger reminder
27 Lotion additive
28 Temple to all the gods
32 Disney's Ariel, for one
33 Gallo winery setting
35 Train unit
36 Teeny
38 "All in the Family" spinoff
39 Acquired relative
42 Gloomy
43 Moth variety
44 Israeli airline
45 Upscale auto
46 Mauna —
48 Raw mineral

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 1-30



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Wilmer Valderrama, 40; Christian Bale, 46; Phil Collins, 69; Charles S. Dutton, 69.

Happy Birthday: Consider your limitations as well as your attributes in order to maintain balance. Decline if someone imposes too much and offers too little. Concentrate on what's important to you, not how to please everyone else. This year is not the time to take a risk emotionally, financially or physically. Plan your actions, choose your words wisely and do what's best for you. Your numbers are 2, 13, 20, 24, 28, 37, 44.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Emotions can help you, or they can cause you grief depending on how you handle situations. If you overreact, expect to pay the price. However, if you focus on opportunities and where to channel your energy, you will gain ground. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): If you want a change, make it happen. It's up to you to execute your plans, not someone else. Invest in your skills, knowledge and ideas. Opportunity begins with you. Think big, and expand your search for success. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Offer help, information and connections. Get together with people you have worked with in the past; a new opportunity will arise. Look for the good in everyone, but don't give someone a second chance to hurt you. ****

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Look for the positive in everyone and everything. Refuse to let emotional matters get in your way. Concentrate on what you want to conspire,

and do your best. A creative idea can change your life if handled correctly. Romance is featured. **

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): A short trip will encourage you to pay closer attention to the people around you. A change someone makes will affect you more than you expect. Take care of your responsibilities. Be cautious with money, possessions and your physical well-being. *****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): A change will perk you up. What you learn will convince you to expand your knowledge, skills and friendships. Participate more, and you'll discover that you have more options than you realize. Romance is on the rise. ****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Emotional matters will surface if you have been putting up with situations that are less than adequate. Don't let anger set in when an intelligent solution will do the trick. Do your best to get along with everyone. ****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Leisure time spent with someone you love or doing something that brings you great satisfaction or joy should take priority. Distance yourself from situations that are only going to upset you or stop you from fulfilling your dream. Romance is in the stars. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take care of your responsibilities. Set your house in order, and take care of relationships that matter to you. How you treat others will reflect who you are. If someone treats you poorly, don't let him or her get away with their actions. *****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Be careful how you treat others. Don't let an emotional situation escalate into something unmanageable. Let your intuition guide you, and keep your temper under control. A change you make to the way you live should be well-thought-out before executed. **

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Think before you make a move or spend a penny. Give yourself time to assess the situation, and consider what's doable. Use your intelligence to avoid a costly mistake or an argument with someone you love. ****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You can offer your help, but don't let anyone take advantage of you. Offer what's doable and will benefit you as well. Someone you've worked with before will offer an alternative. Focus on peace and love. ***

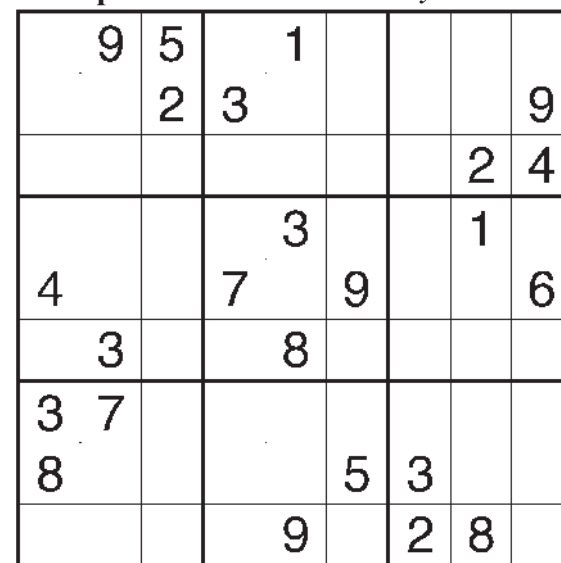
Birthday Baby: You are creative, opinionated and spontaneous. You are fun-loving and carefree.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

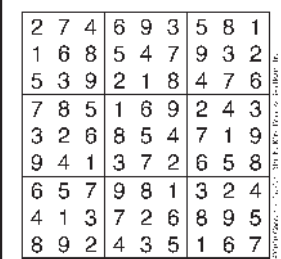


Difficulty Level ★★★

1/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

INTERDIGITATE

Solution: 11 letters

E E U G A E L I N E R I H T E
G O V E R L A P L H Y C N R C
D L O F T O E P C O I E U E A
I A E T I N U A L W T T R C L
R Y L D E O T P D W X O C N N
B O K E C T M N O I S U F O O
M U D G A E A R M E R G E C I
U T L D P S K R J H A N D S T
H F E O S U N I O N A N I T C
T E I L O C K D I B I I A C N
S T F N S P N N N B A N R E U
I A F I G E M E I D G L B N J
L L D U L E R U T L U C L N N
N E A B S O R B E N I W T O O
E R A H S E G R I P S A L C C

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1/30

Absorb, Attach, Bind, Blend, Braid, Bridge, Clasp, Collaborate, Concert, Conjunction, Connect, Couple, Culture, Employ, Enlist, Field, Finger, Fold, Fuse, Fusion, Grip, Group, Hair, Hands, Hire, Join, Lace, Layout, League, Link, Lock, Lodged, Loop, Merge, Mesh, Mixture, Network, Overlap, Relate, Sandwich, Share, Side, Space, Tangle, Thumb, Twine, Union, Unite

Yesterday's Answer: Carpenter

The NEW Treasury 39 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

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AP
This image taken from video on Monday, Jan. 27, 2020, and provided by the National Transportation Safety Board, shows part of the wreckage of a helicopter crash near Calabasas, Calif.

Kobe Bryant helicopter lacked recommended safety device



LOS ANGELES (AP)—The helicopter carrying Kobe Bryant didn't have a recommended warning system to alert the pilot he was too close to land but it's not clear it would have averted the crash that killed nine because the pilot may have lost control as the aircraft plunged into a fog-shrouded mountain, federal investigators said Tuesday.

Pilot Ara Zobayan had been climbing out of the clouds when the aircraft banked left and began a sudden and terrifying 1,200-foot (366-meter) descent that lasted nearly a minute.

"This is a pretty steep descent at high speed," said Jennifer Homendy of the National Transportation Safety Board. "We know that this was a high-energy impact crash."

The aircraft was intact when it hit the ground, but the impact spread debris over more than 500 feet (150 meters). Remains of the final victims were recovered Tuesday and so far the remains of Bryant, Zobayan and two other passengers have been identified using fingerprints.

Determining what caused the crash will take months, but investigators may again recommend that to avoid future crashes helicopters carrying six or more passenger seats be equipped with a Terrain Awareness and Warning System that would have sounded an alarm if the aircraft was in danger of crashing.

The agency made that recommendation after a similar

helicopter, a Sikorsky S-76A carrying workers to an offshore drilling ship, crashed in the Gulf of Mexico near Galveston, Texas, killing all 10 people on board in 2004.

The NTSB concluded if TAWS had been installed, pilots would have been warned in time to prevent hitting the water. The board recommended that the Federal Aviation Administration require the warning systems. Ten years later, the FAA eventually required such systems on air ambulances, but not other helicopters.

FAA officials had questioned whether the technology would work on helicopters, which fly lower and could trigger too many false alarms that might detract from safety.

The NTSB said FAA's response was unacceptable, but dropped the matter.

While TAWS was not installed on the helicopter flying Bryant, the aircraft did have a warning system using GPS, said pilot Kurt Deetz, who flew Bryant dozens of times in the chopper over a two-year period ending in 2017.

NTSB investigator Bill English said they're looking to document whether there was a GPS-based terrain avoidance system, but said it "doesn't look to be part of the scenario."

Zobayan, 50, was well-acquainted with the skies over Los Angeles and accustomed to flying Bryant and other celebrities.

He had spent thousands of hours ferrying passengers through one of the nation's busiest air spaces and training students how to fly a helicop-

ter. Friends and colleagues described him as skilled, cool and collected, the very qualities you want in a pilot.

Zobayan had flown the day before the crash on a route with the same departure and destination—Orange County to Ventura County. But on Sunday, he had to divert because of heavy fog.

His decision to proceed in deteriorating visibility, though, has experts and fellow pilots wondering if he flew beyond the boundaries of good judgment and whether pressure to get his superstar client where he wanted to go played a role in the crash.

Jerry Kidrick, a retired Army colonel who flew helicopters in Iraq and now teaches at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona, said there can be pressure to fly VIPs despite poor conditions, a situation he experienced when flying military brass.

"The perceived pressure is, 'Man, if I don't go, they're going to find somebody who will fly this thing,'" Kidrick said.

The chartered Sikorsky S-76B plowed into a cloud-shrouded hillside as the retired NBA star was on his way to a youth basketball tournament in which his daughter Gianna was playing. Two of her teammates also were on the helicopter with parents.

NTSB investigators have said Zobayan asked for and received permission from air traffic controllers to proceed in the fog. In his last radio transmission before the helicopter went down, he reported that he was climbing to avoid

a cloud layer.

Investigators have not faulted his decision, or determined why he made it. The FAA warns helicopter pilots that it is their job to decide whether to cancel a flight because of bad weather or other risks, and to have a backup plan in case weather worsens during the flight.

Randy Waldman, a Los Angeles helicopter flight instructor who viewed tracking data of the flight's path and saw a photo of the dense fog in the area at the time, speculated that Zobayan got disoriented in the clouds, a common danger for pilots.

He said Zobayan should have turned around or landed but may have felt the pressure to reach his destination, an occupational hazard for pilots often referred to as "got-to-get-there-itis" or "get-home-itis."

"Somebody who's a wealthy celebrity who can afford a helicopter to go places, the reason they take the helicopter is so they can get from A to B quickly with no hassle," Waldman said. "Anybody that flies for a living there's sort of an inherent pressure to get the job done because if too many times they go, 'No, I don't think I can fly, the weather's getting bad or it's too windy,' ... they're going to lose their job."

Deetz said he often flew Bryant to games at Staples Center, and never remembered the Lakers star or his assistants pressing him to fly in bad weather.

"There was never any pressure Kobe put on any pilot to get somewhere—never, nev-

er," Deetz said.

Deetz said that he flew with Zobayan a half-dozen times and that he was familiar with airspace and terrain around Los Angeles and knew "the back doors" -- alternative routes in case of trouble, such as weather changes.

Others who knew Zobayan praised him as unflappable and skilled at the controls.

"Helicopters are scary machines, but he really knew what he was doing," said Gary Johnson, vice president of airplane parts manufacturer Ace Clearwater Enterprises, who had flown with Zobayan about 30 times in roughly eight years. "I wouldn't do it unless he was the pilot."

Zobayan was chief pilot for the craft's owner, Island Express Helicopters. He also was a flight instructor, had more than 8,000 hours of flight time and had flown Bryant and other celebrities, including Kylie Jenner.

He even had a bit TV part when he and actor Lorenzo Lamas, a fellow pilot, flew the ex-girlfriend of comedian Andy Dick around in a chopper for an episode of "Celebrity Wife Swap."

Island Express has had three previous helicopter crashes since 1985, two of them fatal, according to the NTSB's accident database. All involved flights to or from the company's main destination of Santa Catalina Island, about 20 miles off the Southern California coast.

In 2008, three people were killed and three injured when an Island Express helicopter was destroyed as it came in for

a landing on the island. Investigators said the chopper lost power, probably as a result of cracking in turbine blades inside the engine.

Fatal helicopter accidents have fluctuated between 17 and 30 a year since 2013, according to a safety group that includes representatives of the helicopter industry and the Federal Aviation Administration. The rate of accidents per hours flown has declined slightly over that time.

Inclement weather has been cited as a cause of other deadly celebrity helicopter crashes.

Grammy-winning blues guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan was among five people killed in 1990 when their helicopter slammed into a hill in dense fog after leaving a concert in Wisconsin. Music promoter Bill Graham and two others, including the pilot, were killed when the pilot ignored warnings not to fly in rain and fog and flew into power lines outside San Francisco in 1991.

On Tuesday, the last of the bodies and the wreckage were recovered from the weekend crash in Calabasas.

Fingerprints were used to confirm the identity of Bryant, 41; Zobayan; John Altobelli, 56; and Sarah Chester, 45. While the coroner has not identified five other victims, relatives and acquaintances have identified them as Bryant's 13-year-old daughter, Gianna; Sarah Chester's 13-year-old daughter Payton; Altobelli's wife, Keri, and daughter, Alyssa; and Christina Mauser, who helped Bryant coach his daughter's team.

Zverev ousts Wawrinka; into 1st Slam semifinal

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Alexander Zverev began 2020 with three consecutive losses, which meant he had plenty of problems -- and plenty of time on his hands ahead of the Australian Open.

So he showed up early and got to work, spending up to seven hours a day practicing in the week before the decade's first Grand Slam tournament.

That extra time paid off. And how.

Zverev, a 22-year-old from Germany, reached his first major semifinal by overcoming a terrible start Wednesday at Melbourne Park and putting together a 1-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 victory over three-time Grand Slam champion Stan Wawrinka.

"I hope," Zverev said, "this will be the first of many."

After ceding the opening set in 24 minutes, Zverev regrouped and recalibrated his strategy, using all of his 6-foot-6 (1.98-meter) frame to get to balls along the baseline and stretch points until Wawrinka faltered. It worked. Zverev's sometimes-shaky serve -- he was double-faulting once per game while losing all of his matches at the season-opening ATP Cup -- was suddenly terrific, and Wawrinka's barrel-chested baseline bashing weakened, as if he might be injured.

How bad were things earlier in January for Zverev?

"I've been struggling with my forehand, my backhand, my volleys, my drop shot, my return. My waking up in the morning. My everything," he joked Wednesday. "It was not only my serve."

Zverev also was self-deprecating before his first-round match last week, saying that he knew he couldn't win the championship. After his opening victory, he pledged to donate all of the champion's prize money, a little more than 4 million Australian dollars -- about \$2.85 million -- to relief efforts for the wildfires raging around the country if he were to go all the way.

Just two matches to go now.

Wawrinka's backhand is a one-handed tour de force that is not only his signature stroke but is among the most respected and feared shots in all of men's tennis. But it let him down on this day: He finished with five winners and 31 errors on that side, 18 unforced and 13 forced.

It all added up to Zverev getting to the final four at a major in his 19th appearance. He had been 0-2 in quarterfinals.

"I've done well in other tournaments ... but I never could break that barrier in a Grand Slam," he said.

On Friday, Zverev will take on No. 1 Rafael Nadal or No.



5 Dominic Thiem for a berth in the final. Nadal vs. Thiem was scheduled for Wednesday night local time. The other men's semifinal is Thursday, with defending champion Novak Djokovic facing 20-time major title winner Roger Federer for the 50th time.

Both women's semifinals are Thursday: No. 1 Ash Barty of Australia vs. No. 14 Sofia Kenin of the United States, and No.

4 Simona Halep vs. unseeded Garbiñe Muguruza.

None has won the Australian Open; Halep was the runner-up in 2018.

Halep and Muguruza—both

two-time major champs, both former No. 1s—advanced Wednesday with straight-set victories. Halep, who has yet to drop a set, required 53 minutes to dismiss No. 28 Anett Kontaveit 6-1, 6-1, before Muguruza eliminated No. 30

AO 2020
australian open

Halep, Muguruza take contrasting paths to semis in Australia

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Simona Halep went to work a long way from home in the off-season, out near the desert, not taking a day off.

Her focus was on getting fitter in a bid to win a third major title, to go with the championships at Wimbledon last year and her career breakthrough at the French Open in 2018.

Garbiñe Muguruza climbed Kilimanjaro, got away from it all. She didn't want to dwell on two relatively barren seasons since her Wimbledon win in 2017.

After contrasting preparations, Halep is back in the Australian Open semifinals for the second time in three years, and Muguruza has made it for the first time at Melbourne Park. The pair of two-time major winners will play off for a spot in the final after winning their quarterfinals in straight sets on Wednesday.

Both have already won Wimbledon and the French Open and have been ranked No. 1, and are bidding for their first Grand Slam title on a hard court.

"Any Grand Slam, it's a priority. I will not just choose one," Halep said. "But, of course, it's going to be great

if I will be able to win one on hard court."

There are three major winners in the last four, with reigning French Open champion Ash Barty playing No. 14 Sofia Kenin in the other women's semifinal Thursday. The top-ranked Barty is trying to end a drought for Australians at home: The last woman to win the singles championship was Chris O'Neil in 1978.

Halep has been close before at Melbourne Park. She saved match points in the third round and in the semifinals in 2018 before losing the final in three sets to Caroline Wozniacki.

"It's the opposite this year. It's better, though. I feel with more energy going to the semifinals. I feel more confident. I feel my game," she said. "All in all, I'm confident."

The 28-year-old Romanian said that tough loss to Wozniacki was the catalyst for her breakthrough win that year at Roland Garros, where she beat Muguruza in the semifinals.

On Wednesday, she needed only 53 minutes to beat first-time major quarterfinalist Kontaveit 6-1, 6-1.

"Perfection doesn't exist, but I'm very happy with the

way I played. I felt great on court. I was moving great. I felt the ball, like, really, really good," she said. "It was a great match."

Halep spent three weeks in Dubai, her first offseason away from home, so she could focus fully on 2020.

"No days off," Halep said.

Kontaveit held the opening game at love. From then on, it was all one way as Halep went on a relentless, 11-game roll.

Seeded fourth, Halep has advanced to the last four without dropping a set, and said she feels like she's playing her best tennis.

Muguruza was ill at the start of tournament and lost her first set 6-0 before recovering to beat U.S. qualifier Shelby Rogers in three sets, conceding just one further game in the match. She has followed that up with wins over two top 10 players — Wimbledon and U.S. Open semifinalist Elina Svitolina and No. 9 Kiki Bertens.

The 26-year-old Spaniard took a little more than 1 1/2 hours to eliminate No. 30 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 7-5, 6-3 in the quarterfinals, with both players struggling with their serves with the sun shining brightly at one end. The win earned Muguruza

Germany's Alexander Zverev celebrates after defeating Switzerland's Stan Wawrinka in their quarterfinal match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2020.

Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 7-5, 6-3.

"Perfection doesn't exist," Halep said, "but I'm very happy with the way I played. I felt great on court. I was moving great."

Zverev and Wawrinka, a dozen years older at 34, played on the steamiest afternoon of the tournament so far, with the temperature in the mid-80s Fahrenheit (about 30 Celsius) and no breeze to speak of.

Wawrinka had a far tougher trek to the quarterfinals, with a pair of five-set wins along the way—including over No. 4 Daniil Medvedev, the 2019 U.S. Open runner-up, in his previous outing—while Zverev hadn't dropped a set.

Yet it took merely 16 minutes for Wawrinka to move out to a 5-0 lead by grabbing 20 of the match's first 26 points, helped immensely by Zverev's issues controlling the ball: He accumulated nine unforced errors and just one winner in that span.

Soon enough that set was done.

"I was getting ready to (explain) to the press why I lost in straight sets, to be honest," Zverev said.

But Zverev changed tactics and made things competitive in the second set, thanks in part to getting into a real groove while serving, taking all 20 points in those games.

That allowed him to play more freely in his return games and he broke to go up 5-3 when Wawrinka shanked a backhand on one point, then netted a forehand on the next. Zverev shook his right fist and bellowed, "Come oooooooooon!"

One more hold at love later, he evened things at a set apiece.

Right then, suddenly if briefly, the quality of play devolved significantly at both ends of the court. Breaks were traded to open the third set as 10 of its initial 13 points came via unforced errors by one man or the other.

Soon, though, Zverev was straightened out for good, while Wawrinka had more and more struggles.

A backhand into the net gave Zverev the only other break he needed to collect that set. A backhand long let Zverev break for 1-0 in the fourth, and another backhand into the net put Zverev up a double break at 3-0.

Notice a pattern?

Garoppolo takes lessons from Brady into 1st Super Bowl start

MIAMI (AP)—Jimmy Garoppolo had a front-row seat in the best classroom on the best way to prepare for being a starting quarterback in the Super Bowl.

After watching Tom Brady prepare for two Super Bowl wins as his backup on New England, Garoppolo now gets the chance to translate those lessons into his first trip as a starter for the San Francisco 49ers.

"I think just how calm he was," Garoppolo said about what he learned watching Brady prepare for wins over Seattle following the 2014 season and Atlanta two years later.

"Everyone says you've got to treat it like another game, just the way he actually he did it. I was up close and personal, picking up everything I could, seeing how he went about his business and everything. And obviously it worked out the two times that I was there with him."

Brady is the most accomplished Super Bowl passer there is, making nine trips to the big game and winning six of them, including the two with Garoppolo as his backup.

Both those wins were memorable ones with the Patriots overcoming a 10-point deficit in the fourth quarter to beat the Seahawks and then rallying from 28-3 down to beat the Falcons in overtime.

The work for those comebacks began long before Brady went on the field.

"You could see it, how he is, his body mannerisms, everything, just how he prepares for it makes him confident on Sunday," Garoppolo said. "And so, I'm trying to do the same thing, be ready to go and we'll see what happens."

Garoppolo said he received a congratulatory text message from Brady as he prepares for the game. Garoppolo will try to join former Niners great



San Francisco 49ers quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo smiles as he speaks during a media availability for the NFL Super Bowl 54 football game, on Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020, in Miami.

Steve Young and Jeff Hostetler as the only quarterbacks to be active for a Super Bowl win as a backup quarterback to later go on and win the title.

If that happens, the 49ers will have the Patriots to thank as the team that has played in the past three Super Bowls still has an impact on this year's game.

The rebuild of the 49ers was fast-tracked midway through the 2017 season when the Patriots offered to trade Garoppolo to San Francisco for a second-round pick.

With Brady showing no signs of slowing down or wanting to retire and Garop-

olo set for free agency the following spring, coach Bill Belichick decided to offer him up to a franchise he respected.

"It was a big step in our ascension as an organization,"

general manager John Lynch said. "He made us better as an organization instantly. He's a winner. A lot of that is just inherently who he is but I think the 'Patriot Way' helped shape that as well. He had great experiences there. All he cares about is winning."

That was evident from the day Garoppolo arrived in San

Francisco to join a team that started its first season under coach Kyle Shanahan with nine straight losses.

Garoppolo began learning the offense immediately and stepped in late that season to win the final five games as a starter.

That performance led Shanahan to change plans and offer Garoppolo a \$137.5 million, five-year deal that off-season instead of following his original plan of pursuing Kirk Cousins in free agency.

"He just blew our minds, the success he had when he

was out there with very little preparation and a little foundation of the offense," Shanahan said. "By the time that season ended, I thought it would be hard for him to do, but he made our decision very easy."

Garoppolo's rise was delayed by a season-ending knee injury in Week 3 against Kansas City in 2018 but he has played a big role in the Niners success this year even when he isn't asked to throw much as when he had only eight attempts in the NFC championship game against Green Bay.

He has four fourth-quarter comebacks and ranked tied

for second in the league with three games of at least four TD passes in the regular season.

He also has become a leader of the team, getting praised as being "one of the guys" in the locker room but also showing the willingness to crack down when necessary.

"He's not just one of the guys, he's the top guy," right tackle Mike McGlinchey said. "He's our leader, he's our guy, he's the top dog in our locker room. In those types of moments he has every credibility to stay stuff like that because of what he's done and what he's built and the work he's put in day in and day out."



MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP)—The blue medical tent on each NFL sideline is a place no player ever wants to go, and everyone else would love to sneak inside for a peek.

Yes, it's a basic pop-up tent anchored by a metal rectangular frame on the ground around an exam table. When a player is suspected of having a concussion or an injury where a little privacy is helpful, someone pulls the tent into place and people disappear inside, away from prying eyes.

"Probably one of the first things you notice is it's actually a lot more roomy in here than you might think," Dr. Allen Sills, the NFL's chief

NFL tries to dispel mystery around sideline medical tent

medical officer, said Tuesday.

Sills and Jeff Miller, the NFL's executive vice president of health and safety innovation, gave reporters a look at how the league handles concussions and other injuries during each game — whether preseason, regular season or postseason — before Sunday's Super Bowl.

They also showed off the video booth where athletic trainers, video technicians and a specialist watch for injuries with the ability to rewind and freeze video to spot a player whose injury might have been missed by medical personnel on the field.

But that medical tent where players are diagnosed with a concussion or other injuries, before being sent to the locker room, remains a place filled with a bit of mystery that Sills tried to dispel with facts:

■ The NFL introduced the tent on each sideline three years ago for concussions.

■ Once the tent goes up, the player is surrounded by the team physician, a neuro-trauma consultant not affiliated with the team if it's a concussion evaluation, and the team trainer.

"There's plenty of room for four people to be inside

here," Sills said.

The tent provides a bit of privacy in the midst of thousands of fans and the bedlam of a game. Not for competitive reasons, but to create a miniature version of a doctor's exam room for privacy even if the walls are made of polyester. Sills said that allows everyone inside the tent to focus on the task at hand.

"In an exam, I need visual contact and visual concentration of the player," Sills said. "The stadium is a very visually distracting environment, right? You've got video boards and exploding fireworks and lots of movement,

so inside here you can actually focus and get a little more visual concentration. So this allows us to get a better exam than we could do outside."

The NFL also has video monitors on each sideline complete with an Xbox controller to manage replays or freeze plays. Only medical personnel are allowed to use the monitors to check for concussions and injuries.

The tent also can be used for other injuries, but that isn't required.

"You will see them sometimes come in to maybe examine a sensitive body part," Sills said. "If they need to

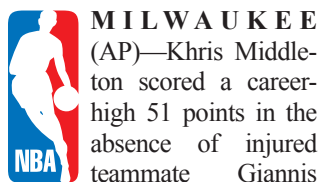
re-tape a groin or do something like that or if a player's emotionally upset and they want to examine him in private. It's optional for other injuries, it's mandatory for all concussion evaluations."

Kansas City cornerback Kendall Fuller is happy that he's never gone inside the tent himself and worried for a moment that a question about the tent was a potential jinx. Players don't really like to think about injuries.

A little privacy when hurt helps.

"You never know what injury somebody has going on," Fuller said. "It's definitely good they can have privacy in there."

Middleton scores 51 as Bucks beat Wizards, 151-131



MILWAUKEE (AP)—Khris Middleton scored a career-high 51 points in the absence of injured teammate Giannis Antetokounmpo, leading the Milwaukee Bucks to a 151-131 victory over the Washington Wizards on Tuesday night.

Middleton, hoping to be chosen an All-Star reserve for the second straight year on Thursday, helped the Bucks hold off a second-half Wizards rally. Middleton also had 10 rebounds and six assists.

Milwaukee (41-6) scored a franchise-record 88 points in the first half, finished with its highest total of the season and won its ninth straight game despite the absence of Antetokounmpo, who sat out with a right shoulder injury.

Bradley Beal led the Wizards (15-31) with 47 points, his second straight 40-point game and sixth of the season.

76ers 115, warriors 104

In Philadelphia, wearing No. 24 in honor of Kobe Bryant, Joel Embiid scored 24 points in his first game in three weeks, leading Philadelphia to the victory.

Embiid and the rest of the Sixers wore No. 24 and No. 8 Bryant jerseys in warmups in honor of the Los Angeles Lakers star, who was killed Sunday in a helicopter crash. Embiid was granted permission from Hall of Famer Bobby Jones



to wear the retired No. 24 instead of his usual 21 for his first game since he tore a ligament in a finger in his left hand.

Philadelphia's Ben Simmons had "Mamba Forever" and "RIP Gigi" (for Bryant's daughter, among the nine killed in the crash) on each sneaker and scored 17 points.

D'Angelo Russell led Golden State with 28 points. Glenn Robinson III had 20.

Celtics 109, Heat 101

In Miami, Gordon Hayward

had 29 points and nine rebounds, and the Celtics led virtually the entire way.

Jaylen Brown scored 25 points for Boston, and Kemba Walker added 16 points and eight assists. Daniel Theis finished with 10 points and 11 rebounds.

Goran Dragic led Miami with 23 points and Jimmy Butler scored 20. Bam Adebayo had 16 points and 10 rebounds for the Heat, who lost at home to an Eastern Conference opponent for the first time in 14

games this season.

Pelicans 125, Cavaliers 111

In Cleveland, Zion Williamson scored 14 points — all inside — in an uneventful NBA road debut, helping the Pelicans to the victory.

Playing in just his fourth game, Williamson added nine rebounds in 30 minutes, his most as a pro. He didn't do anything spectacular or particularly crowd pleasing, but that hardly mattered to the Pelicans, who are just happy to have the hyped rookie on the floor and healthy.

Jrue Holiday scored 26 points for New Orleans, and Brandon Ingram had 24.

Collin Sexton scored 24 for the Cavs, who have lost eight of nine. Rookie Kevin Porter Jr. scored 21 points,

Milwaukee Bucks' Khris Middleton puts up a shot against Washington Wizards' Troy Brown Jr. during the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020, in Milwaukee.

and Larry Nance Jr. had 17 points and 11 rebounds.

Raptors 130, Hawks 114

In Toronto, Kyle Lowry had 12 points and 11 assists while becoming Toronto's career assists leader, and the Raptors earned their season-best eighth straight win.

Serge Ibaka had 24 points and 10 rebounds and Pascal Siakam added 24 points as the Raptors won their 10th in a row over Atlanta.

Toronto center Marc Gasol scored 10 points but was unable to return after leaving early in the third because of a sore left hamstring. Gasol missed 12 games because of a strained left hamstring between Dec. 18 and Jan. 12.

With his ninth assist, a long outlet pass to Terence Davis in the fourth, Lowry moved past Jose Calderon (3,770) on the team's career list.

John Collins had 28 points and 12 rebounds for the Hawks, and Trae Young had 18 points and 13 assists.

Suns 133, Mavericks 104

In Dallas, Devin Booker scored 20 of his 32 points in the third quarter, Deandre Ayton had a season-high 31 points and the Suns never trailed.

Booker started the scoring in the third before the ball had even been thrown in, making a free throw after the last of three first-half technicals against Dallas was called

against Tim Hardaway Jr. after the halftime buzzer.

With the head start from Booker, the Suns outscored the Mavericks 48-22 in the third on their way to surpassing last season's win total of 19 with their fourth victory in the past five road games.

Luka Doncic scored 21 points for the Mavericks. Jalen Brunson and J.J. Barea each had 15.

Grizzlies 104, Nuggets 96

Ion Memphis, Tenn., Dillon Brooks scored 24 points and Jonas Valanciunas had 23 points and 12 rebounds, leading the Grizzlies to their third straight win.

Ja Morant had 14 points as Memphis led from start to finish. Jaren Jackson Jr. had 10 points and blocked a career-high seven shots.

Denver's Nikola Jokic had 25 points and 13 rebounds for his 22nd double-double in 28 games. Jerami Grant had 21 points, including 13 in the fourth quarter.

Hornets 97, Knicks 92

In Charlotte, N.C., Terry Rozier had 30 points and 10 rebounds, and the Hornets snapped an eight-game losing streak.

Miles Bridges added 15 points in Charlotte's first win since Jan. 4. Willy Hernan-gomez had 12 points and 10 rebounds for his first double-double of the season. Cody Zeller finished with 10 points and 10 boards.

The Hornets trailed by many as 13 points in the first half.

Julius Randle scored 24 points for New York, and Marcus Morris Sr. had 23. Elfrid Payton collected 10 points, eight rebounds and eight assists.

MEEK

From Page 28

hosted the event, club stalwarts Kento Akimaru and Jinju Thompson topped the event in the waters off Pacific Islands Club Saipan.

Kento was the No. 1 overall finisher in the longest race of the day, completing the three-loop course (nearly 3 kilometers) in 32 minutes flat

for his third straight victory in the Mighty course. In the women's division, Thompson was the first out of the water and seventh overall after recording 35:12.

In the so-called Meek two-loop course (about 2K), youth swimmer Wataru Kadokura was the first male and No. 1 overall finisher as he made it to shore at the 33:50 mark. He was about a minute ahead

of women's champion and fellow SSC member Kaithlynn Chavez, who lost a few seconds after heading the wrong direction on the way to the finish line and ended up timing in at 33:51.

For more information on the Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim or the SSC, email saipanswimclub@gmail.com or message them on their Facebook page.

Pacific Mini Games.

And speaking of the ITU, the TRAC general secretary said the organization was finally accepted as an associate member last year.

"After three years of lobbying, the CNMI's case was discussed and voted during International Triathlon Union Congress in Lausanne, Switzerland last September 2019. We were accepted as an associate member under the Oceania Triathlon Union," he said.

ITU is the international governing body for the multi-sport disciplines of triathlon, duathlon, aquathlon, and other nonstandard variations. The ITU hosts the top level international race series the ITU World Triathlon Series and the ITU Triathlon World Cup.

Along with becoming an associate member of the Oceania Triathlon Union and the inclusion of triathlon in the 2021 Pacific Mini Games on Saipan, Castro also lists organizing the Tagaman Triathlon last year as one of their major accomplishments in 2019.

"TRAC managed to continue the torch lit by hosting the 30th Tagaman Triathlon in March with the presence of Ruben Chappins and Hideya Miyazuka, the men's champion and runner-up of the inaugural Tagaman held 29 years ago," he said.

Along with Castro, TRAC's leadership is made up of president Florance Antonio, vice president Manny Sitchon, and treasurer Jojo Valencia.

For more information on

JSN

From Page 28

Dante combined for 8 to give them a 41-27 spread at half-time.

But what comes up must come down and that exactly what happened to JSN come the start of the second half. With Ebuén this time getting able support from Martin Moreno and Joseph Galulu, PPG Paint went to town in the third quarter and managed to trim their deficit to just a deuce, 49-51, heading into the fourth and final quarter.

In the playoff period, both teams were involved in a seesaw battle with JSN finally nailing out PPG Paint thanks to some timely baskets by Ocampo and Jun Tabora.

Jun Tabora was smoking hot in the duel with 24 points to take home best player of the game honors, while Ocampo

chipped in 20 markers of his own. Ebuén shone for PPG Paint in the loss with a game-high 25 points.

It was the fifth win in six games for JSN, while the loss was sixth against no wins for PPG Paint.

Last Saturday, Team Lakay evened its win-loss card to 3-3 after outlasting Eats Easy-The Game, 69-65. It was a sorry loss for the favored Eats Easy-The Game, as they practically led the first three quarters before faltering in the end.

Ronald Bernardo was named best player of the game after leading Team Lakay with 18 points. Center Richard Williams and forward Melvin Capalad fired 13 and 10 points, respectively, for the victors. Rey Cabaltica top-scored for the now 5-2 Eats Easy-The Game with 17 markers.

The UFO caging resumes at 6pm tonight with Blue Haus

taking on IT&E in the first game in the masters division, while RNV squares off against Pacific Islands Club Saipan in the open division at 7:30pm.

JSN 76 – J. Tabora 24, Ocampo 20, Wesley 7, D. Tabora 4, Mungcal 4, Alegre 4, Tobias 3, Jarop 2, Rosario 2, Santos 2, Gatdula 2.

PPG Paint 68 – Ebuén 25, Galulu 10, Elchico 8, Moreno 8, Sanciango 7, Montoya 4.

Scoring by quarters: 17-19, 41-27, 51-49, 76-68.

Team Lakay 69 – Bernardo 18, Williams 13, Capalad 10, Canbrera 8, Reyes 4, Hipolito 4, Romo4, Solis 4, Macaraig 2, Alegre 2.

Eats Easy -The Game 65 – Cabaltica 17, Dayao 10, Fidelino 7, Arellano 7, Torregosa 6, Erdene 6, Sablan 4, Abobo 2.

Scoring by quarters: 10-18, 29-35, 47-48, 69-65.

TRAC

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"The CNMI is hosting the Pacific Mini Games next year and triathlon is one of the events included in the program. We are preparing as a host federation and as competitor at the same time," said Castro.

TRAC is collaborating with Oceania Triathlon Union early on and in March, an International Triathlon Union representative is coming over to assist in planning and making the course design of the triathlon event in the Pacific Mini Games.

Castro said also to be discussed with ITU is the technical assistance they could provide in training CNMI triathletes who would be selected to compete in the 2021



**Kobe Bryant
helicopter lacked
recommended
safety device**

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Saipan Tribune Sports

**Zverev ousts
Wawrinka;
into 1st Slam
semifinal**

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

TRAC looks for better, brighter '20

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Triathlon Association of the CNMI is looking at hosting more events in 2020 as it continues to pick up the pieces from the difficulties and challenges brought by Super Typhoon Yutu.

While Yutu happened in October 2018, recovery efforts from the strongest typhoon to hit the U.S. that year carried on to 2019 and as a result sports events on island somewhat took a backseat.

TRAC secretary general Ricky Castro said the federation currently is planning to host seven events this year, the biggest of which is the 31st Tagaman Triathlon on March 21. Named after the ancient



MARK RABAGO

Chamorro chief Taga, the 2-kilometer swim, 60-km bike, and 15-km run Tagaman is the longest running sporting event in western Pacific.

TRAC only last Sunday held the Aquathlon & 10KM Pathway Run and will have the Sprint Triathlon on Feb. 29. The two events and the 2019 Saipan Duathlon held last December

Triathlon Association of the CNMI secretary general Ricky Castro, right, and volunteer timer Romy Ampit wait for the last swimmer to finish during last Sunday's Aquathlon and 10K Pathway Run in the waters off Killili Beach.

are actually part of what TRAC calls its Tagaman Series, which are three events leading to the Tagaman Triathlon.

The four other events on TRAC's 2020 calendar are the Tagakids and Sprint Triathlon

on July, the Off-Road Duathlon & Trail Run on Aug. 30, the Bike & Run for Cure on Sept. 26, and the aforementioned 2020 Saipan Duathlon set for Dec. 19, 2020.

Aside from its scheduled

events for 2020, TRAC is also looking forward to hosting the triathlon event of the 2021 Pacific Mini Games that will be held on Saipan for the very time.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

JSN forward Jun Tabora was named best player of the game in their masters division matchup against PPG Paint last Sunday in the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. With Tabora in the photo is UFO caging commissioner Lito Espino.

JSN beats PPG Paint in masters

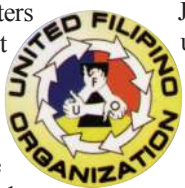
By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

JSN used an explosive second quarter to upend PPG Paint in their masters division matchup last Sunday in the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

PPG Paint took the initiative from the opening tip

behind Sonny Ebu. With the sweet-shooting forward hitting his mark, PPG Paint took a 19-17 lead over JSN after the first quarter.

JSN, however, would unleash hellfire on their opponents in the second quarter, as ageless wonder Alex Ocampo pumped in 10 points and Tabora brothers Jun and



See JSN on Page 27

Meek & Mighty set for Feb. 15

The Saipan Swim Club will host the 2020 edition of the Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim on Feb. 15 in the waters off Kanoa Resort in Susupe.

SSC coach Richard Sikkell said registration is at 7am with the open water swim starting at 8am. There will be three distances for the 2020 Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim—a 1-kilometer, a 3K, and a 5K course. "Meek" means gentle (for the 1K gentle swim) as opposed to the "mighty" swimmers who will take on the 5K," said Sikkell when asked about why the event is called the Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim, which actually was introduced by former SSC coach Michael Stewart about 14 years ago.

Sikkell said this marks the first time in two years that SSC will be holding the Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim. He said it was cancelled last year as the island was still reeling

from the effects of Super Typhoon Yutu, which devastated Saipan and neighboring Tinian in October 2018.

"SSC invites all

swimmers, young and old, competitive or recreational, experienced or novice to come out and enjoy the cool lagoon waters in front

of Kanoa Resort for a classic amongst the Saipan swimming events," he said.

In 2018, the last time SSC

See MEEK on Page 27



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Saipan Swim Club will hold its 2020 Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim on Feb. 15 in the waters off Pacific Islands Club Saipan.